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SWHAT!

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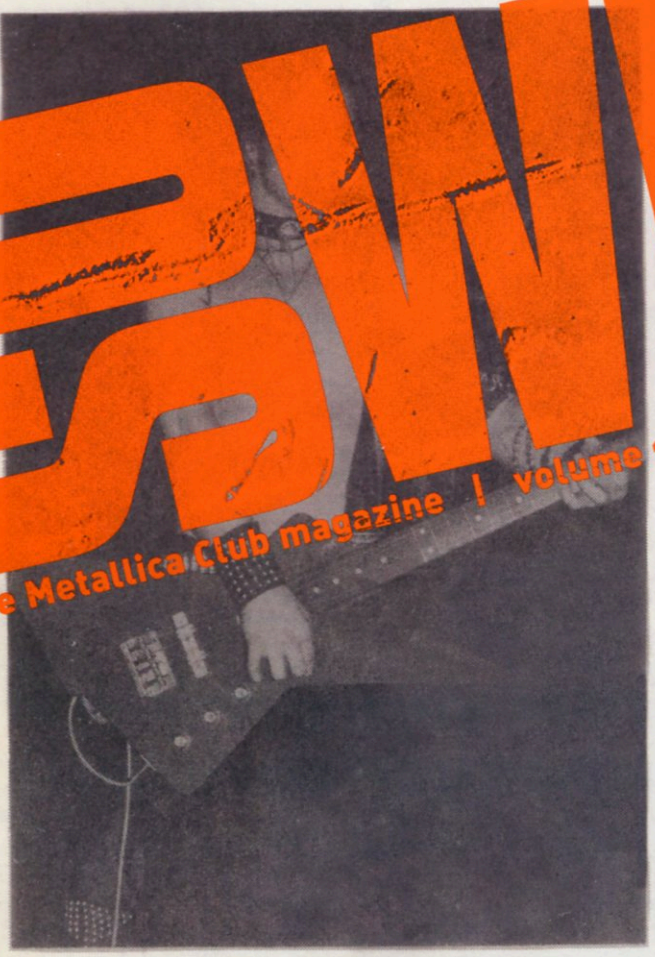
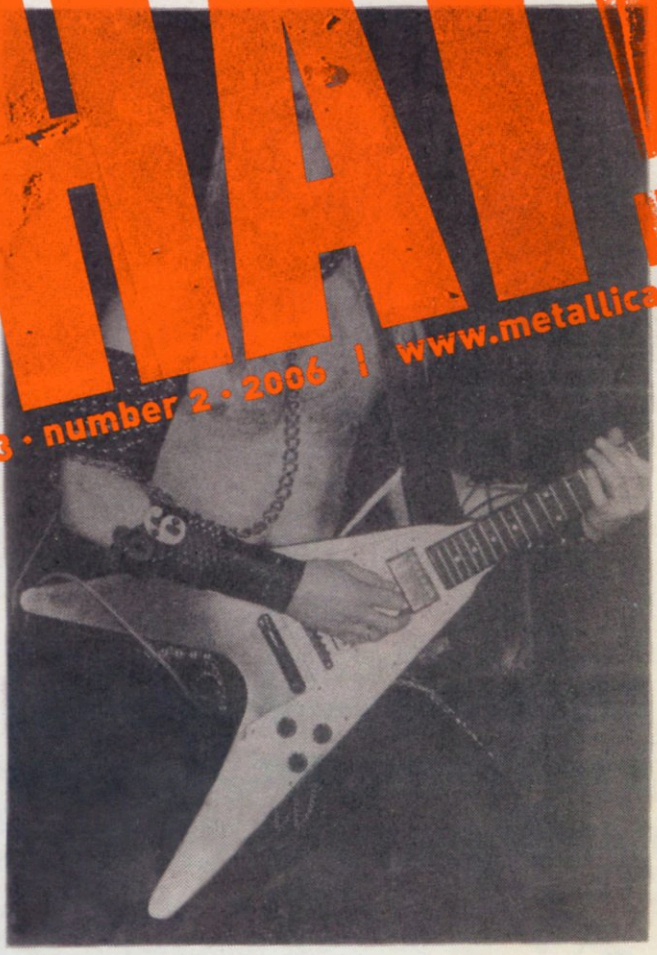
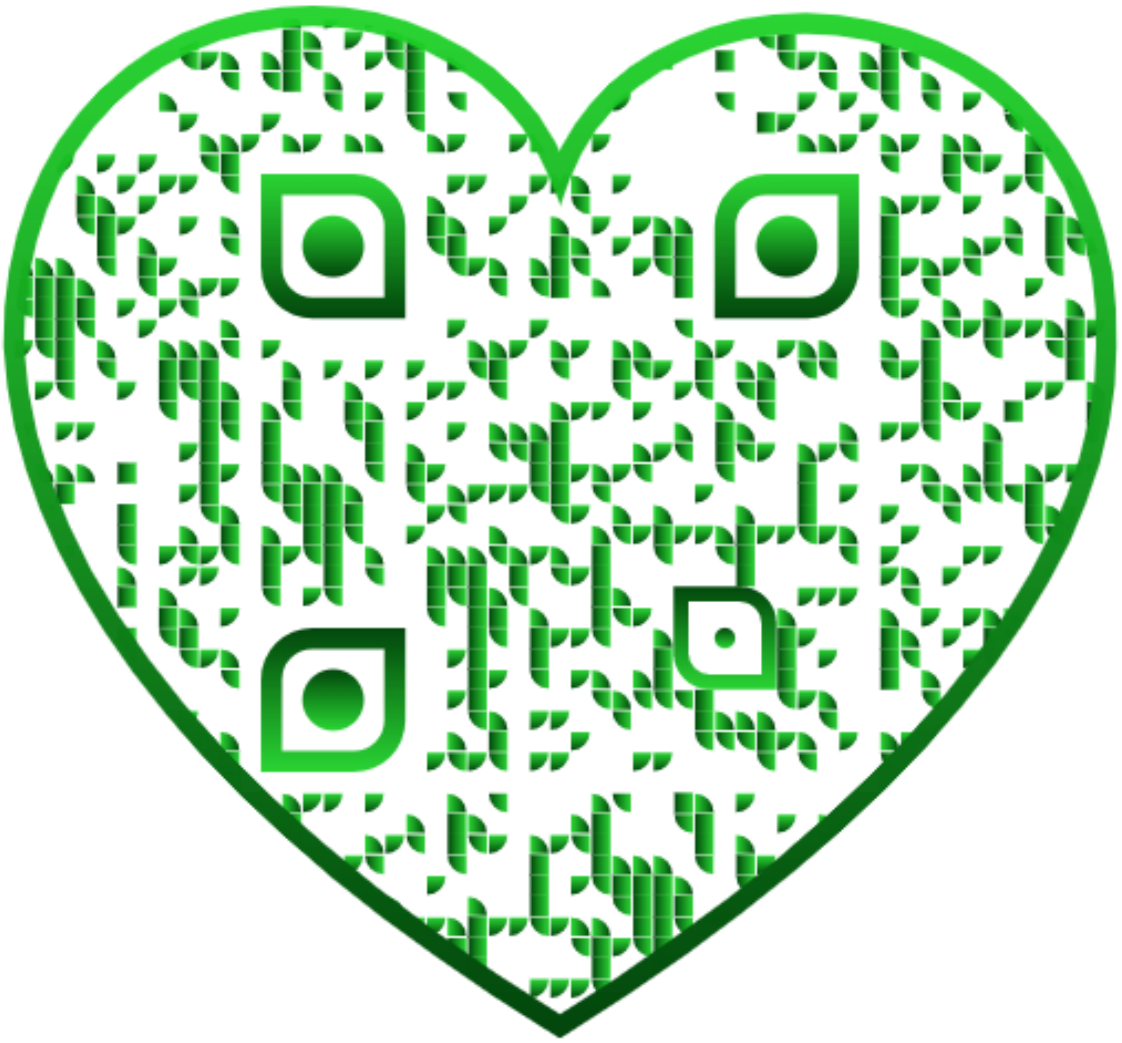




METALLICA

AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!!!



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HARDWORKING METALLICA FRIEND AND FAN, THE LATE RICH BURCH, AKA SKITCHY. PHOTO BY BRIAN LEW.

SO WHAT!

THE METALLICA CLUB MAGAZINE • VOLUME 11/NUMBER 2/2000

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FEATURES

8 + **FRIENDS**
Since they were wee laddies, Kirk Hammett and John Marshall (former guitar tech and stand-in on two tours for James) have been friends. In the first part of a long, engaging (and bloody hilarious) conversation, the two sit down for a chat about the old days.

22 + **{BACK IN} THE OLD DAYS**
Brian Lew, a Bay Area metal veteran who really WAS there at the start of Metallica's Bay Area reign, reminisces about the early '80s in words and pictures.

32 + **ROUND TABLE: "MASTER OF PUPPETS"**
Here it is. The band sit down and focus their discussive skills on one of the most important albums in metal history, and on enjoying it's 20th anniversary.

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We repeat, please keep those nasty chihuahuas on the leash!

4 + **W'LASH**
An abridged version of Whiplash, just to get you back in the mood before the real thing.

5 + **CLUB NEWS**
All the news that's fit to print...that's the phrase isn't it?!!

6 + **A SPECIAL EDITOR'S NOTE**
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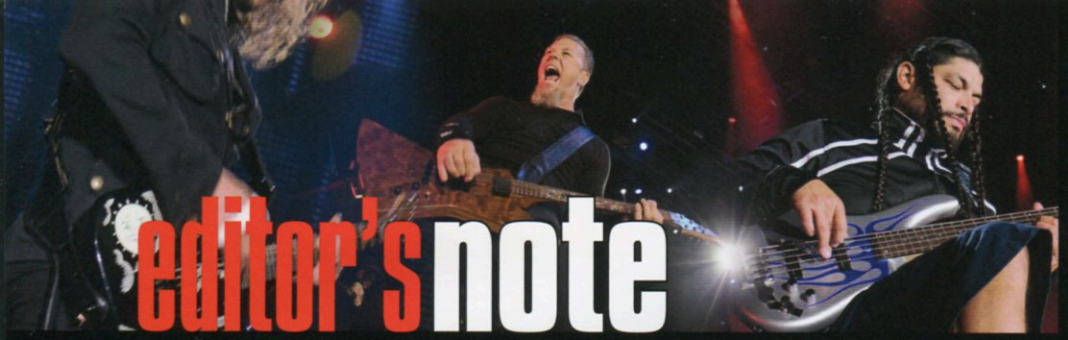
48 + **SHORTEST STRAW**
Results for 12-4 (including a rather brilliant winner) and more goodies to be snaffled by creative Metalliheads.



editor's note

Hey everyone,

Welcome to this pretty special 13.2 SW!

Aside from the great content (and the first part of a hilarious and very cool chat between Kirk and old skool Metallidude John Marshall—thanx guys u did well☺) there is an overall emotion in this issue which resonates for me.

Thru Brian Lew's awesome story on ~~the~~ The early daze, it was time to get some Cliffage in SW! Seriously time!

That it felt rightn' comfortable is as much down to the poise of nature that is Rob Trujillo as anything else... thanx to TtHAT man for sure!

So enjoy this one... I know u will. Thanx as always,

Steffan
Ed Itor

P.S. W'lash?
Err, a shortened 'Whiplash' section!!!
Full monty 185...

PUBLISHER
The Metallica Club Inc.

CLUB PRESIDENT
Vickie Strate

EDITOR
Steffan Chirazi

ART DIRECTOR
Mark Abramson

DESIGN CONSULTANT
Rose de Heer

PROOFREADER & EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Suzanne Howard

MERCHANDISE MANAGER
Toby Stapleton

MET STORE ONLINE ADMINISTRATOR
Danna McCallum

MERCHANDISE ASSISTANT
Rick Hardin

MEMBERSHIP, EDITORIAL ASSISTANT & CUSTOMER SERVICE
Samantha McNally

METALLICA.COM
Jeff Yeager

LOCAL CHAPTERS & WEB ASSISTANT
Margaret Hartman

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Steffan Chirazi, Jeff Yeager, Brian Lew, John Marshall

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enter mailman

BIG UP FOR BAND AND CREW

I just wanna give the men in Metallica a MASSIVE thank you, for coming down to South Africa and for kicking our butts in Centurian. I am still punching my fist in the air at every moment I get flashbacks from the gig. Also a big thank you to the "Metallicrew" for the great sound, lighting and for a brilliant video set up. Please come back soooooon!!

Mike Harrison
Benoni, South Africa

ED: Thanks for the words Mike, but I'm worried about the 'fist-punching and flashbacks' bit... be sure you're in a safe environment if at all possible!!!!!

THE HOME OF METAL

As an English Metallica fan I have seen you guys live before. A lot. A helluva lot!! I've never seen a bad show, but on a couple of occasions I've seen shows that I thought simply couldn't be topped. Nowhere Else to Roam at Milton Keynes in '93. As I left there I thought there isn't a chance in hell that any band can top that set. Then there was Download 2003 at Donington, where I jumped up and down like a kid at Christmas, and stood in awe with tears of joy in my eyes as you hammered through that surprise (and believe me, it was a surprise to me) set. And then I went to Dublin RDS in 2004. My wife was eight months pregnant with our second child and he rocked out inside her for the full duration of that stunning set. (Even now as he approaches his second birthday as soon as he hears the opening to 'Blackened' his head starts to nod and he hammers away on his invisible drum kit!!)

And then you go and do this: Donington Park – Download Festival – 10 June 2006. I am stood in the home of Metal, waiting for the greatest band in the world to come on stage with a couple of my closest friends (one of whom is decidedly not the biggest Metallica fan in the world, the fool). And you come out and do that. Starting with 'Creeping Death' took me straight back to '93 at Milton Keynes again and then you go on to play that set – With "Puppets" from start to finish and I knew I was witnessing something truly special. And so did my pal who really wanted you to be bad, yet left saying he'd never seen anything like that in his life. All we heard for the rest of the weekend was how good you were. Fuck Axl Pose and his antics, he's not even worthy of washing your underwear.

And so you did it again, and I have no doubt in my mind that you'll do it again, and again and for that simple thing, I thank you, from the bottom of my heart, with everything I have. See you next time!

Stuart Morris
Cleethorpes, UK

ED: Nice one Stuart. I think Metallica and Donington (I know, 'Download' but it will ALWAYS be Donington to me) have a special relationship, perhaps more so than any other gig they play.

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

Hey Guys. This is the eighth time I have typed this letter out but I finally have put a few words together for you, so you know how you have helped me through a long and hard stressful year. This has to have been the most heart breaking and difficult time in my life. And only for having such good supportive friends a loving son Alfie aged six and my husband Bri, and your music I don't think I would be the person I am now.

I moved over to Dubai in U.A.E a year ago and life has not been easy. With one thing and another we wanted to get away from it all. And make a fresh start. But I missed the UK like crazy and Charlotte (my step-daughter), who we never got to say good bye to, who we all miss and love so much. It was hard for all of us to settle at first, but I felt it the most. Plus not being able to watch my fave band of all time play live at Leeds or the Download Festival or any concerts in the UK. But I have all your albums on CD and DVDs and bootlegs etc... That kept me happy and connected.

A few months of being here and I found out I was pregnant. All the family was excited to hear there was going to be a new addition to our family. But sadly June 21st I got taken in hospital for an emergency c-section. My baby daughter, who we named MJ, was very ill and I was very ill too. Sadly June 24th she passed away. I cannot begin to tell the sadness I felt inside, an empty feeling that wouldn't go away. I came home from hospital still trying to understand what had happened and why? A few days passed and I was at a stage were I felt lost and numb inside. I would just retreat into myself. I felt like I didn't fit in anywhere, I didn't know what to do with my self. It was my son that kept me going, I had to carry on for him and my husband.

Then one day while I was sat in the car my son put your "S&M" CD on and 'Nothing Else Matters' came on. At first I was like, 'no! Mummy doesn't want to listen to music just yet,' but it had the opposite effect. It made me feel strong again inside, able to deal with what life throws at me know matter what. As long as you have someone there who loves you, you can get through anything together. It has always made me feel good inside when I listened to it. We had the song, the "S&M" version, played at our daughter's funeral as it was a song that brought me into your lives as a newbie fan five years ago. And also brought me and my husband closer together at this sad time. The song always meant a lot to me and now it will mean even more. Because every time I listen to it will bring to mind the three most things that I love in life, my family, Metallica and their

enter mailman

w'lash

music and that we will never forget about MJ know matter where we are in life or what we are doing. Or you Charlotte because you and your sister shared the same birthday and we will always love you. I never thought music could have such an impact on life like that. So thanks for being there for me, even though you didn't know it.

Marie Gregory
Dubai U.A.E

ED: Keep on going Marie...keep on going...and thanks for sharing this with us.

ONE OF US

Thanks to Cliff Burton and Jerry Only, all I wanted to do when I was in school was play the bass and be in a band. When you think you're stupid and don't know where you're going and don't understand that there's tomorrow to think about, looking up to Cliff Burton gives you a day to day mission and makes you happy, it gets you through. But... I left school without any qualifications and found that bands you play in are like women. (Or men, depending on what side of the fence you stand.) You love them, but usually they're not that good and they come and go. Its usually not as cool as we hope. It was interesting to read that James fixes up cars in his spare time. The rhythm and voice of Metallica gets his hands dirty, his thoughts clean and heart good by engineering in a workshop. It's what makes him happy. How cool is that? I ended up getting my act together, doing an apprenticeship, getting a degree, becoming a Design Engineer and working all over the world. Now I have my own business repairing and rebuilding espresso machines. It keeps me home and makes me much cash. How cool is that? All those years of wanting to be like Metallica I find that James is actually more like us!!! Hetfield is human. How cool is that? If Hetfield is doing it, then engineering and craftsmanship is very, very cool. If you have no direction, maybe school isn't working out or your job isn't making you happy, then be as cool as James. It's about sacrificing the present for the future. Metallica made a sacrifice that most people wouldn't. The early days were hard. They deserve everything they have. How cool is that? So if in doubt, get your head down, get skills, get education and get happy. The future's amazing, you just have to work at it. Be like James. How cool is that? Cliff Burton walked planet Earth. How cool is that? Still love the guy.

Glen Adams
Pontypool, UK

ED: What a great letter! Loved it Glen, many good points for folks to absorb. Thanks man...

A MEMBER OF METALLICA SPEAKS...

Just wanna say that at Donnington 2006 (Download) I was lucky enough to be invited on stage and do backing vocals during 'Die Die My Darling.' Best moment of my life!!! Thanks Rob for inviting me on and Lars, I was the guy who asked you for a drumstick and then you threw me one.

Paul Jones
Woking, England

ED: Hahahahaha, F%@#&*g GREAT man, GREAT! I love it...

Q James, I was listening to an audio clip of you on 'Breuer Unleashed' and all the guys were trying to guess what you and your wife's wedding song was. But then the clip ended, and we never heard the answer! So what was it? Some Skynyrd, or something obscure?

Leslie Filion
Sault Ste Marie, Ontario CANADA

JH: 'Are You The One I've Been Waiting For' – Nick Cave.

Q Lars, I was just wondering, with playing the drums so fast, do you do a lot of injury to your wrists and ankles? If not, what do you do to prevent the injuries?

Kathy H.
Frederick, MD

LU: Well, back when I was capable of playing drums fast before my mid-life crisis (FRIENDLY ED'S WARNING–LOVEABLE 'LARSIAN' ANSWER ON THE HORIZON)...yes I hurt and ache and bleed a lot... I mean, just look at my posture? One of the XFM radio guys said I look like a question mark onstage! On a serious note, the hardest working man on our tour is Don, our physical therapist. I spend as much time as possible with him before and after the show stretching, getting a massage, and loosening up. That's the best remedy to keep physically healthy, and, knock on wood, prevent any injuries.

Q Rob, I was just wondering if you would ever consider cutting your hair really short?

David Schmuttermaier,
Brisbane, AUSTRALIA

RT: Sure. It's either lazy and long or lazy and bald. Nothing in between for me. Right now I'm digging this caveman look.

Q Kirk, where do you find your inspiration for your solos? I spend hours and hours playing on my guitar and everything I do comes back to your work. Any tips? Thanks.

Chris Thomas,
Winnsboro, Texas

KH: That's a bit of an esoteric question, inspiration is where YOU find it and it can be anywhere. I get a lot of inspiration from movies and books.

Q Guys, I've always wondered, Have you ever sneezed into the mic, or have the straps on your guitars ever fallen off (mine always does)?

Sam Williams,
New Brockton, AL

JH: No, but I've chipped many teeth and given myself many a fat lip attacking the mic.

RT: I've never actually sneezed into the mic but one time I was spinning my bass and one of the strap locks broke as I flung the bass around. Luckily for me, and whoever might've been in the line of fire, I was able to prevent a very dangerous accident 'cos one of my fingers just happened to have a grip on one of the lower thick heavy gauge strings which prevented the bass from flying off and doing damage.

KH: My straps are always falling off but I've managed to learn to how to play guitar without a strap. I don't know how to play guitar and sneeze at the same time.

clubnews

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METALOCALYPSE – THE CARTOON

James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett recently laid down a series of character voices for the cartoon series "Metalocalypse," a 20-episode series based on the adventures of 'Dethlock,' the world's biggest heavy metal band, which premiered on the Cartoon Network's "Adult Swim" show. James and Kirk do the voice-work for a series of different characters and it's important to note that the guys do NOT play themselves. There are plans for the series to air in Europe, but no specific details are as yet available.

"THE SIMPSONS"

On September 10th, 2006, Metallica appeared inSpringfield to do what they do best for Homer, Bart and Co. Above, we can proudly present the guys in all their Springfield glory.

COMING SOON...

We can confirm that there will be, at some point, a DVD of all the promotional videos Metallica have made. Word is it will emerge before the end of 2006, but given the nature of these things, let's just say that as details become available, we will let you know via the web.

METALLICA ON iTUNES

Metallica's catalogue is now available via iTunes. The band issued the following statement to accompany the move, and for the record, here it is again just as it appeared:

Happy Monday!! From the "It's about fucking time!" file, comes this:

At 12:01 AM, on Tuesday July 25th, we will begin offering our music on the iTunes Music Store, a Cupertino, CA based upstart outfit, who we feel may very well have a bright future.

Over the last year or so, we have seen an ever-growing number of Metallica fans using online sites like iTunes to get their music. So, in continuing with the tradition of offering our albums for sale online (which we've been doing for a few years through various sites), as well as making our live concerts available for download in their entirety (through the livemetallica.com site), we are now offering fans the opportunity to obtain our songs individually.

Since many fans already have our albums in one form or another, but might still want to check out the digital versions, we decided to throw a couple of previously unreleased live tracks (Seattle, '89) on to each of the first four albums (Kill 'Em All, Ride The Lightning, Master of Puppets, & ...And Justice For All). We chose these four because, unlike the more recent releases, we were only capable of writing 8-9 songs for each of these albums!

Oh, and by the way, the iTunes Music Stores in the U.S. and Canada are the only ones that will be offering Metallica. This is unfortunately due to the fact that our record company overseas doesn't seem to want to play ball with us on this at the moment. Hopefully this will get sorted out ASAFP, but we didn't want our fans in North America to have to wait any longer while our overseas record company tries to get their shit together!

So on Happy Tuesday, fire up your iTunes, your iPods and whatever else you've got, like we do, and enjoy iMetallica!

Update... as of September 1st, the situation in Europe is the same but we will keep you posted as to when things will change with iTunes in Europe.

a special editor's note from

SO WHAT!

STEFFAN CHIRAZI

"MASTER OF PUPPETS" CHANGED MY LIFE

NO...REALLY!

IT'S EARLY JUNE. I'M GONNA BE LEAVING FOR THE EUROPEAN SUMMER TOUR SOON, AND WITH IT BEING THE 20TH ANNIVERSERY OF "MASTER OF PUPPETS," I'VE TAKEN MANY CHANCES THESE PAST FEW WEEKS TO FALL BACK IN LOVE WITH THE ALBUM. AS I LISTEN TO 'BATTERY' FOR WHAT MUST BE AT THE VERY LEAST THE TWO THOUSANDTH TIME...AND AS IT FOLDS INTO THE TITLE TRACK, INTO '...THING,' INTO...I REALIZE SOMETHING RATHER HEAVY: IT IS MY 20TH YEAR OF LIVING IN THIS COUNTRY.

AND I FURTHER REALIZE that I am always reluctant to tell stories about myself, but that you know what, this is as good a time as any to share a personal story whose weight, gravity and influence on the course of my life is immeasurable. It is also a story which involves the "Master Of Puppets" album. And it is a story which shows how that most flippantly used of phrases — 'that (fill in the blank) changed my life' — is absolutely, one hundred percent justifiably employable in this case. Indeed, I'll go a step further and wonder out loud if any album changed anyone's life to the extent "Master Of Puppets" changed mine. I invite those who feel it did, after reading this introduction, to write down their experiences and send them on to us here at HQ. Anyhow...

...PICTURE THIS.

The month is January and the year is 1986.

I am a young man, 18 years young. I am a student. I am also a freelance writer for one of the biggest weekly music mags in London, England, SOUNDS. I bullshitted my way into rock journalism when I was 15 in 1983, and started getting paid for it in the summer of 1984. The first album I ever professionally reviewed for SOUNDS was "Ride The Lightning" (it got 5 stars out of 5), the first gig I ever professionally reviewed was Breaking Sound, a festival in Paris, France, and the first professional feature I ever did was on Metallica at said festival.

* * *

EDITORS HAVE COME AND GONE from the paper these last coupla years, and recently, this man called Tony Stewart has taken on the editor's chair. He doesn't like me. He doesn't like this teenage metal head. He makes my life uncomfortable, but I always have allies within the paper, so despite all the attempted kickings, he can't bring me down that easily.

And really, despite the fact he's pissed when he hears I am traveling, it's no big surprise that I'm the one who's sent to LA to report on the latest Metallica album, "Master Of Puppets," then being mixed in North Hollywood. And it was no big surprise when I come back to London knowing I've just heard a motherfucker of an album, a deal of such uniqueness that I know, I KNOW, my paper, that is, MY FUCKING PAPER, is going to give this band it's front cover story in recognition. They'll trust me. They'll know what I'm talking about. They'll BACK me.

So I walk into Tony Stewart a couple of days after returning from the trip, and I take a deep breath because the man intimidates me, but I KNOW I HAVE TO DO THIS.

"Err, hi...Tony?"

"Wotcha Steff!" he says, and he always said it like that, 'wotcha Steff,' like I was some dopey pillock, a moronic metalhead, a dirty teenager with no culture.

And I tell him why I think Metallica should be SOUNDS' cover story shortly, why "Master Of Puppets" is such a stand-out album, why it will break new ground not just for metal, but for music.

I stand in front of him, naked really, a naked, nervous teenager in front of a seated, satirical smirk. And I cannot quite process the response, but it's coming at me something like this...

"...you don't know what the fuck you're talking about...hahaha... you need to get your ideas together 'Steff' because this ain't going to cut it...Husker Du, now THAT'S the band who will change music not some spotty bunch of yank heavy metallers..."

And I feel sick inside, nervous nausea, like I want to vomit with embarrassment and anger. I slowly back away from his desk, the rest of his words flying around my head like arrows, and stumble home in a daze.

* * *

I AM DEPRESSED. Very depressed. I dream of beating the living shit out of this man, this fucking man who wants to ruin my life, who tells me I don't know 'what the fuck I'm talking about' when I do know.

And then it slowly dawns on me as I process my depression...

...that I must move.

I must leave this fucking asshole and his intimidation behind me and I must move. My mother has an old friend, Monica, in San Francisco, and she generously offers me a roof and help finding my feet if I do move there...and I know I must.

* * *

AND SO IT IS that I, the 18 year old, will spend a few months working crappy jobs as well as grabbing whatever tidbits Stewart tosses at me, so as I can save the money to move to San Francisco. An older journalist, somewhat of a former SOUNDS hero, Garry Bushell, sponsors my journalist visa, and on hearing about this, Stewart has me banned from the SOUNDS/Kerrang! building. This lasts for a day. When K! editor Geoff Barton learns of my plans, he immediately tells me I will work for him as a freelancer at Kerrang! And promptly frog-marches me back into the building, past Stewart and into the beginning of my new life.

A month or so before I'm due to leave London, I run into Metallica at their UK label Music For Nations. I start talking about my plans, and Cliff Burton gets very interested, declares it's 'very cool' and scribbles down his phone number.

"Call me when you get there dude, we'll hang out."

* * *

AND SO THIS 18 YEAR OLD does get to San Francisco a month or so later, and he does call Cliff Burton. And Cliff Burton doesn't just hang out once, he arranges to meet me once or twice a week in the city, always on Broadway in the heart of North Beach. And he introduces me to his good friends, Jim Martin, Dave Di Donato, Lou Martin...he brings me to see one of his favorite bands which features another old friend Mike Bordin, this bunch called Faith No More. He brings me for burritos and Brandy Ho's Chinese food, he makes me laugh and makes me feel like I'm not alone out here. His friends, too, make me feel curiously welcome. And soon, the sight of that green VW station wagon roaring down Broadway with a flurry of ginger hair and fingers flying towards the steering wheel as some raucous punk band destroys any remaining calm in the vicinity, is a warm and familiar sight. In two small months, Cliff made me feel at home, made me feel like I could have a home here, made me feel part of something and introduced me to important life friends. I remember us all spending a long time talking with some Jehovah's Witnesses the night before he left for Europe (I think it was the night before, maybe two nights before) and I remember Cliff discussing all manner of things with them for hours. Yes, hours. He liked to do that, not simply because he was enjoying a good heckle (Cliff liked a good badgering session at the best of times), but because he wanted to try and understand, to learn...and maybe a little bit to have some fun too...And I remember him and Jim and Dave and Lou talking about the ranch and everyone getting up there for a Big Rigger's meeting when he was back from tour...

* * *

IT'S 20 YEARS since "Master Of Puppets" came out. It's 20 years since "Master Of Puppets" really, really changed my life. It's 20 years since I moved to San Francisco, and it'll be 20 years this September since Cliff Burton died.

It's also 20 years since Lars Ulrich quickly picked up the loose baton of friendship left behind, refusing to drop it ever since.

20 year anniversaries all of them, which have an enormous impact on me personally, emotionally.

And for what it's worth, a good friend of mine and fellow scribe in the UK, Paul Elliot, told me something in the mid-90s. he told me that during a SOUNDS editorial meeting a few years earlier, Tony Stewart had admitted that what he said to me, the 18 year old naked and vulnerable me, that day had been one of his biggest errors of judgement. And for years I felt bitter that I didn't hear that vindication.

But you know what I think now, 20 years later? I think I owe Tony Stewart a debt of gratitude that no fruit basket is big enough to signify. And all of it, really, because of "Master Of Puppets." And funnily (sadly, no really, sadly) enough, as "...Puppets" continues to sell millions in this, it's 20th year, SOUNDS is long gone.

FRIENDS

a conversation between John Marshall & Kirk Hammett

Kirk Hammett's face erupted into a beaming smile when the offer of a chat with his old friend John Marshall was first advanced by SW! Marshall, a friend of Kirk's since childhood, has deep history with Metallica, stretching back to the earliest of days as a roadie/guitar tech before taking the stage as a Metallimember for a tour or two when James Hetfield needed some help. In the years which have followed, Marshall became a family man and Hammett increasingly busy. Their chances to catch up with each other are not nearly as frequent as in those good ol' days, so aside from giving SW! a rare and unique insight into who Kirk Hammett is, it was a golden opportunity for the two to hang out. So it was that SW! met up with Kirk and John at Kirk's new San Franciscan abode, took some digi-snaps, left a tape-recorder, batteries and cassettes before vanishing into the night and leaving said pair to talk freely and alone. The results are quite brilliant in the levels of empathy they evoke in all of us...those Wayne and Garth 'metal' moments of youth, when nothing was more important than shredding, Schenker plus rock 'n'fukken roll! Party on dudes...

Steffan Chirazi, July 2006

ACILITY
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MET

John Marshall: So, at the beginning, where were you born?

Kirk Hammett: It wasn't El Sobrante, the fan site is wrong.

JM: There's not a hospital in El Sobrante.

KH: No one is ever born in El Sobrante!

JM: Unless they're in a cab on the way to Richmond (looking through bags of old scrapbook materials).

KH: Oh yeah. Royal Norfolk Hotel, London Street, London. Misters Hammett and Marshall. Sixteen bucks per day—no, sixteen pounds per day. First February, 1984. That would be the "Ride the Lightning" tour? No, that's the "Kill 'em All—"

JM: First time in Europe, yeah.

KH: Yeah, that's when we played the AardShock festival?

JM: It was the Venom tour.

KH: Yes, the Venom tour, that's right. That's when we stayed at the Royal Norfolk.

JM: Remember, we were in there for like a few days or something, and we were up all night because the time zone difference—

KH: Right, right.

JM: And we had this, we had my silver boom box?

KH: That's right.

JM: And we had that one cassette tape. And one side had the Police "Synchronicity" and the other side had "Parkening Plays Bach" on it?

KH: Oh, yes.

JM: We played that over, over and over.

KH: That's right. That was our chill-out tape.

JM: Totally, yeah.

KH: Yeah...anyway, I was born in San Francisco at St. Luke's Hospital, at about, I don't know, 3:30 in the morning. My mom said that I didn't want to come out of the womb! And yeah, I grew up in the Mission, on 20th and South Van Ness, 855 20th and South Van Ness, to be exact. *(John is still rummaging through old stuff and showing Kirk)*... Oh, my Lord, yeah, I remember.

JM: Remember that name? This is like the notes, my notebook from preparing for Donington and Day on the Green...

KH: Wait, wait. Oh, that's Lars's drum list? Drum shit for Europe.

JM: Drum shit for Europe, yeah. Every day I'd make a list of shit I had to do, and then cross it off when it was done.

KH: Oh, my God.

(There follows much to and fro regarding an old guest list with many old friends from the past on it – ED.)

KH: This is very cool. B****r!

JM: Oh, yeah.

KH: You know what, B****r was a kleptomaniac?

JM: He stole stuff.

KH: Yeah.

JM: Wow.

KH: That's what Big Mick told me. Just recently, just like a couple weeks ago.

JM: Wow.

KH: He said he would go out with them and all of a sudden, you know, they go into the store and they come out and B****r would be emptying his pockets of all this stuff. A lot of stuff. *(Kirk returns to the notebooks and lists John has brought over.)* This is all amazing.

JM: Oh, it's kind of boring for me, it's just all notes that I used to take. Shit I had to do every single day for the longest time.

(More banter about notes made and memories shared before the conversation returns to Kirk growing up.)

KH: So yeah, I grew up in the Mission and I went to Catholic school from first to seventh grade, and after that mid-year in seventh grade I moved to El Sobrante. And that's when I met ya. It was at Juan Crespi Junior High. Seventh grade.

JM: We took the same bus home.

KH: Yeah.

JM: But your stop was farther down.

KH: Yeah.

JM: And then I saw you holding a Kiss album or something. Or something.

KH: Yeah, well, this is when we were freshmen in the ninth grade, I think. You lived about a half a mile away from me or something. And then when we became freshmen we started going to De Anza High School, and we used to walk there and walk back, a whole bunch of kids from our neighborhood.

JM: Oh, yeah. And then we'd hang out in front. It was like there was all these jocks, and then the stoners, and then there was this little group of us that were like the misfits who didn't—

KH: Yeah, the 'acid rockers' they would call us.

JM: Yeah. It's funny, I remember you'd come to school every day with that blue down jacket...

JAMES GUITAR SETTINGS 9/12/85

LEPER

KIRK HEAD #2

9½ (7) 1½ 4 (5) (7) 2¼ 4¾ ~~EFFECT~~ SEND SLAVE 1½

CAB L 35

JAMES #2

8½ (7) 2¾ 0 (5) (7) 2 4 EFFECT

CAB R 35

FRONT

○ ○ ○ ← SPARE REPLACE IF NOISY.

○ (6CA7) (6L6) (6L6) (6CA7)

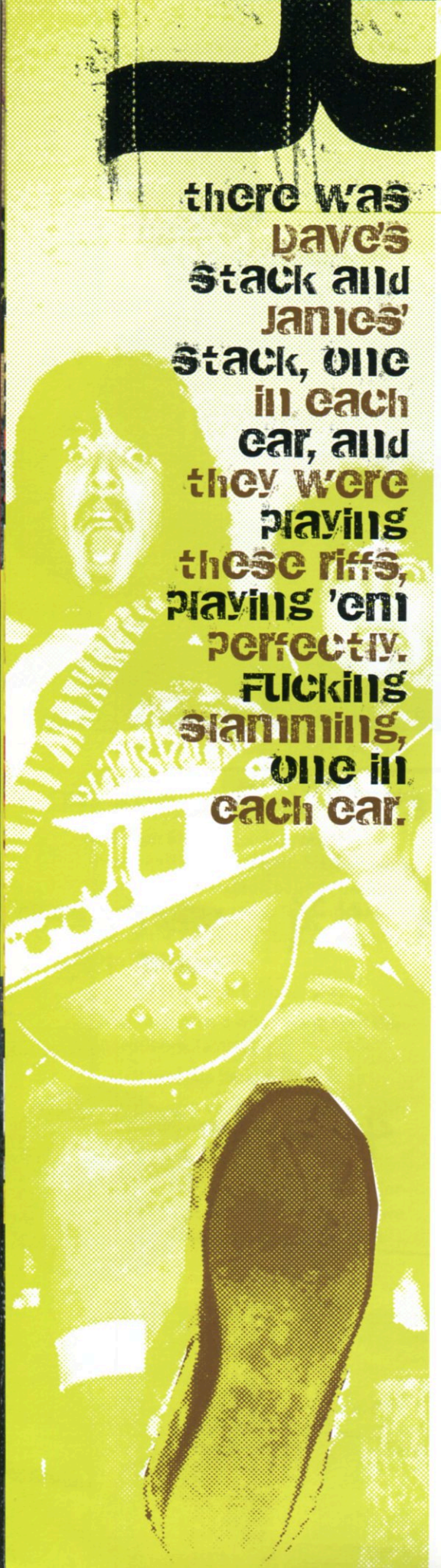
BACK

NEW SHT 10/2/85

5 MASTER 1 — TIGHT CRUNCH 5 LEAD — ~~DRIVE~~

4 HEAVY SLOW — 6 LEPER

SWEET SILENCE STUDIOS ApS
KRISTOFFER HANSSON · FLEMMING RASMUSSEN



KH: Yeah, it was down to my knees.

JM: ...a tape recorder with Jimi Hendrix, and you'd just be stoned out of your head.

KH: Yeah. Had glasses and long hair.

JM: Oh, the glasses, yeah, and—

KH: I was super, super shy and self-conscious.

JM: As we all were.

KH: Yeah. And so I totally just found refuge in music. And all of us, we were kinda like the misfits who listened to like, you know, weird music.

JM: To Led Zeppelin and Kiss.

KH: Yeah. And I was way into Hendrix and Cream and Zeppelin and Aerosmith and Kiss and Pat Travers. And then later on there was like UFO and Rush. And then Van Halen hit the scene—

JM: Oh, yeah.

KH: But I remember, we first hooked up because I was way into Kiss at that point, and you saw me holding a Kiss album. And I said, "Yeah, man. I'm going to be getting a guitar, I'm gonna trade this Kiss album and ten bucks for this guy's guitar," and it was Dan Watson.

JM: Which guitar was it?

KH: It was that really weird red Montgomery Ward looking thing that you tried to turn into a double neck.

JM: Oh, yeah. I cut it up and put together with that other weird—

KH: -guitar.

JM: I was trying to make it double neck. Just like Jimmy Page's! It worked, I could play 'Stairway to Heaven.' That's when I was trying to learn to play 'Stairway to Heaven.'

KH: And you needed a double neck, so there you go.

JM: It worked! Check this out... *[shows Kirk a ticket stub]* It was my first concert. It was AC/DC, Van Halen, Pat Travers, Foreigner, and Aerosmith.

KH: We went together.

JM: No, I went with Eric Slessinger, Bill Peterson, and Joel, I think.

KH: Then who did I go with? I probably went with my Dad? No. You know, I probably went with Gary Holt *(Exodus guitarist)*, maybe?

JM: It was, I think that was before Gary, it was '78.

KH: Who did I go with? Because I went too.

JM: Yeah, me and you didn't go to that. Here's one that me and you went to. Check it out *(another ticket stub)*.

KH: Oh, yeah, I remember this.

JM: Santana, Al DiMeola—

KH: Santana and Al DiMeola, September 13th, 1980. Yeah. I remember that, and Al DiMeola's killer.

JM: *(more ticket stubs)* And UFO with Paul Chapman.

KH: Yeah. I went, I remember going to that. Even asked a girl to go with me. And we held hands.

JM: Oh, man.

KH: Oh, Jesus, I was dying. All right, Anvil Chorus at the Keystone, Berkeley. Blind Illusion and Wraith. February 23, 1983. That was right before I joined the band.

JM: Check this out.

KH: Holy shit!

JM & KH: Metallica and Exodus.

KH: November 29th, 1982, at the Old Waldorf.

JM: That looks like the second time Metallica played in the city.

KH: Yeah, the second time we played in the city (remember, at this point Kirk was in Exodus – ED). It was, I think, Metallica's second time they played, too.

JM: That's what I mean. No, that was the second time Metallica played. First time was at the Mab.

KH: Yeah.

JM: And you guys opened.

KH: No, no, that's the night after this. The first time they played, Metallica played, they opened for Laaz Rocket. And then everyone left after Metallica was finished, and Laaz Rocket played almost an empty house. And November 30th, that Tuesday was the Mab and it was a benefit and Exodus played with Metallica that night as well.

JM: I remember that.

KH: And I thought Metallica was just sensational.

JM: I remember, because I walked up and stood, I mean you could just walk

up on those gigs, and I stood right in front, and there was Dave's *(Mustaine)* stack and James' stack, one in each ear, and they were playing these riffs and just all double track riffs, playing 'em perfectly. Fucking slamming, one in each ear. I was like, that's cool. You know, it was heavy. Anyway, so 1978 and then you started jamming with Mark Lane.

KH: So yeah, I had the Kiss album, and I traded it for that first guitar, and I messed around with it for maybe a day and stuck it in my closet. And continued to listen to Kiss. And then my brother asked me if I was still playing my guitar and I said, sure. Of course I was lying. He said, "Okay, let's go buy you some new strings then," and I went with him and I bought new strings. I thought, since I've spent five bucks on the pack of strings I might as well put 'em on the guitar. And I put 'em on the guitar, took me five hours or so. And I never quite put it down after that. But it was on those walks back from high school, after school, that we were walking together with a bunch of our friends and we got on the subject of a guitar. There was this lady across the street who was a folk guitar player and she wrote down some guitar chords for me to learn. So the first guitar chords I learned were just like all the basic open chords, and I learned how to play 'Dr. Love' by Kiss.

JM: *(As an aside)* Have you heard the bluegrass versions of all that stuff?

KH: No. I don't think I want to.

JM: Pretty good, actually.

KH: But how did we first connect, like on guitar pieces?

JM: I remember coming over your house and you showing me "Rock and Roll Over" and UFO's "Obsession" and all this stuff. You had all these albums. And I went to your house one afternoon and we were like checking out albums and stuff.

KH: Yeah. I remember at that time I was listening to Thin Lizzy and ZZ Top, Lynyrd Skynard. Led Zeppelin.

JM: And you were talking about guitar, and I had already been playing guitar since I was six, off and on. I mean, I wasn't real good at it but I took lessons from six or seven. So I was like, "Oh, hey, I know how to play guitar, kinda," you know? And I just went from there.

KH: Yeah. I remember within my first two weeks of getting a guitar I had a band. I went to school, and I said to the guys I was hanging out with, "Hey, man, let's start a band. Why don't you play bass, I'll play guitar," and this other guy already knew how to play drums.

JM: That was Kerry Vanek.

KH: Yeah.

JM: And Mark Lane.

KH: Yeah, Mark Lane was a bass player.

JM: You guys'd borrow amps, they had a Vox stack—

KH: Yeah.

JM: –at the school, and you'd both plug into the same—

KH: ...amp. And for the bass, the guitar, and the microphone for the vocals. It was Dan Vandenberg who was singing.

JM: You remember Darryl Goodbeer? He was like the senior who ripped on jazz guitar.

KH: Yeah, he was a really, really great player.

JM: And he showed you some stuff, you guys are jamming and you're playing 'Purple Haze,' and you're just jamming on the solo, and you go, 'tin, tin, tin, tin, pew, pew' *(sings cheesy lead guitar sounds)*.

KH: Yeah. Total garbage...

JM: ...and Darryl Goodbeer's going, "Kirk! Kirk is so good!" He's jumping up and down and you guys are all playing through the same amp.

KH: And out of tune. Yeah. And that actually became the first band that I had. But I remember all I had was that cheap electric guitar and it sounded awful. And so I started playing an acoustic guitar.

JM: And you remember Darryl Goodbeer had a real Les Paul?

KH: Yeah, he had a real Gibson Les Paul!

(More discussion about the Goodbeer Les Paul is had before conversation switches to further memories).

JM: But then remember we used to go to Berkeley? We had a couple of bucks.

Take the bus to BART. Take BART to Berkeley.

KH: BART to Berkeley, yeah.

JM: Then trade some records, get some records, get some cash back, buy a slice of Fat Man pizza and then go back home.

KH: And we went to Rather Ripped Records on the other side. That's where I first saw the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal albums. I remember seeing Motörhead's "Overkill" there and Vardis. Of course they had all the UFO stuff, and that's where I saw the Tygers of Pan Tang. And a lot of those times we went to Berkeley, we would sell records and get heavy metal albums.

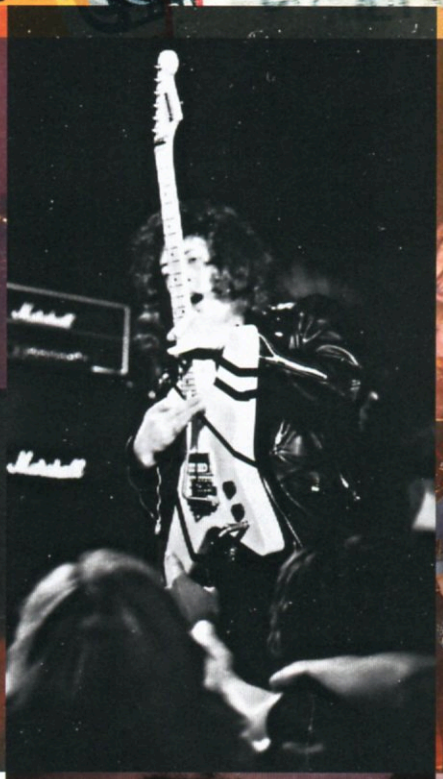
JM: And you remember, we'd always go to Rasputin's, which was the holy grail, and then we'd go to Leopold's?

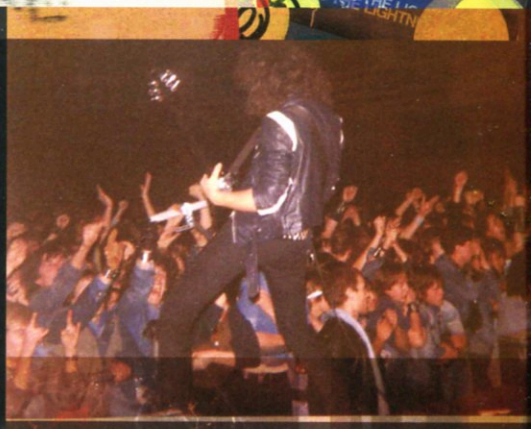
KH: Yeah.

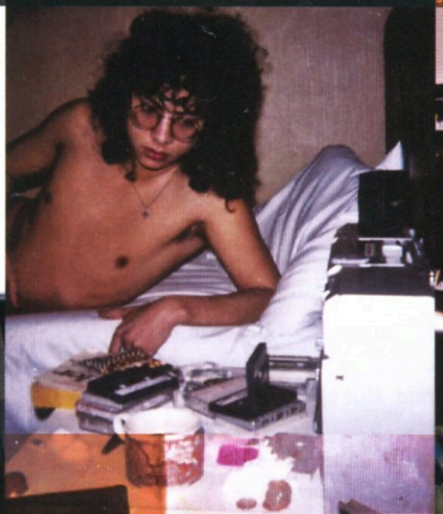
JM: Downstairs? I specifically remember going to Leopold's and they'd display the album covers on the back wall.

KH: I remember I was in Leopold's and you walked up to me and said, "Man, I just saw this album cover, man, and it had this like monster face on it, and it's like really shocking, it really jumped out at me." I was like, "Really?" And I asked you to show me but you couldn't find it, someone must have bought it in that short period of time. And then a couple weeks later I was at a friend's house and he played me some Iron

John Marshall
Sa., 14. Sept. '85
Festival!
OPEN AIR '85
CAIN'S
BALLROOM
HEAVY
85
METALLICA







Maiden. We were all sitting around drinking beer—I was 16 years old, and all of a sudden I heard 'Prowler.' I thought it was the fucking greatest thing in the world. Greatest thing since UFO. And I remember telling my friend, "Hey, man. Who is this?"

JM: Prowler. Oh, you know. Wah-wah, wah-wah— *(sings opening riff)*

KH: Yeah. And he said, "Oh, this is Iron Maiden. Here's their album cover." And the second I saw the album cover I knew that's what...

JM: That's the one I was talking about, yeah.

KH: And then I remember getting a tape and playing it for you, and I said "This is the band. Iron Maiden."

JM: That's cool.

KH: And I remember, I said, you know, "They're like UFO, man. They fucking kick ass." And I remember I said, "I'm gonna form me a heavy metal band." And that was my first metal band. It was with Tom Hunting, myself, Carlton Melson on bass and Keith Stewart on vocals.

JM: Oh, yeah. I remember that guy.

KH: Oh, and Tim Agnello on guitar.

JM: Oh, that's right.

KH: He's a preacher now.

JM: Is he?

KH: Or minister, or reverend or something.

JM: I remember he had a triple pickup Black Beaut—

KH: Yeah, he had a Les Paul custom. Yeah.

JM: Black Beauty custom, and fucking routed the back to put a phase shifter or something in it?

KH: Yeah. Yeah. You know, not a bad idea but not to do it to a Gibson Les Paul Black Beauty!

JM: One from the mid-'70s. That's when we used to go into Leo's Music in Oakland, and there'd be like five or six used Gold Tops on the wall for like 3, 4, 500 bucks apiece, you know? And nowadays they're like 20 or 30 grand.

KH: Yeah, I remember going into Guitar Center, or Don Wehr's Music City and seeing a 1958 Flying V. I said, "Hey, man, how much is that '58 Flying V?" Because I knew it was rare and old. And the guy said, "Oh, it's really expensive there, that's a really expensive guitar, super rare." And I said, how much is it? And he goes, "$1500 dollars." That guitar now is worth $150,000.

JM: That guy, Don Wehr's now has a furniture store in Santa Rosa.

KH: You're kidding me.

JM: So you bought a white Fender Strat from there.

KH: Oh, yeah! I talked my Mom into putting a down payment on a white Fender Strat. Actually it was a blond Fender Strat. It was a 1978 Fender Strat, and fuck, I wish I still had that thing man!

JM: Somebody had it somewhere. Who told me? Rich Bandoni or somebody said something about seeing that guitar...

KH: I've been trying to find that guitar for the last 20 years.

JM: Remember you couldn't afford the case?

KH: Yeah. I didn't have enough money for a case so I had to carry it home in a fucking garbage bag, man. All my friends had their guitars with cases. Except for me. I had to carry mine around in a garbage bag.

JM: Well, you more than made up for that now, so, anyway. We're riding home on BART after you bought the guitar, and you're like, "Fuck this, I want to play my new guitar." You just whip it out and start playing it on BART and people are staring.

KH: And then I got a Randall bass amp *(for it)*. And man, it had the rattiest distortion on it, and it was super clean, but I didn't know any better. And I loved it. It was a lot of racket. I mean, when I picture it now, Fender Strat through an old Randall bass amp, uuugghhh!

JM: It was loud.

KH: Puke! It was super loud but that's all it was. I remember, I traded it in for a Sunn amp.

JM: Sunn with CMOS Technology!

KH: Yes. Yeah. And man, all of a sudden I had a ton of distortion.

JM: I know—

KH: And then I took that Strat and I routed out the bridge pickup to put a Humbucker in there...

JM: Did I do that?

KH: Yeah, you did the rout job and put the humbucker in and DiMarzio Super Distortion there and we put a DiMarzio Super II in there. At one point I might have even had a Bill Lawrence in there? I'm not sure.

JM: I remember those pickups.

KH: Yeah.

JM: They're still around.

KH: Yeah. We'd sell our albums, go to Rasputin's, then go to Leo's Music and play their guitars all afternoon.

JM: Dan Watson and Bill Peterson told me, when they used to go in there, Rich and the guys'd say, "Watch the counter. We're gonna go get a hot dog across the street." And like Dan and Bill would be in there selling strings and shit at the counter.

KH: That's killer. I remember I went to Leo's and I saw a black Flying V. And I thought, "Oh my God, that's just like the one Michael Schenker plays." And so I traded that Strat in for that Flying V, and we all worked at Mira Vista Country Club in Richmond, and I did it so as I could pay the Flying V off.

JM: In El Cerrito, up by the hill, and—

KH: Yeah. You worked there, I worked there, Dan Vandenberg worked there.

JM: Jeff Andrews.

KH: And yes, that's where we met Jeff Andrews, and he became the bass player of my new band, which had Tom Hunting on drums, Jeff Andrews on bass.

JM: Was Baloff in there by then?

KH: Gary (Holt) on guitar. Me on guitar, Gary on guitar. And that was the first version of Exodus. Well, actually the first version of Exodus was me, Tom, Carlton, and Tim Agnello. That was the first version of Exodus, me, Carlton, Tom Hunting, and Tim Agnello. Then the second version of Exodus was Tom Hunting, Jeff Andrews, myself, we were a power trio, and then we got Gary Holt. And then we were, you know, the two guitar attack.

JM: Just like Maiden.

KH: Yeah, just like Maiden.

JM: Or Thin Lizzy.

KH: Yeah, we were doing Thin Lizzy songs, Maiden songs, UFO songs, Priest songs. I think we even did like an Angel Witch song and a Tygers of Pan Tang song. But yeah, then we found Baloff. And I met Jeff Andrews at the ol' Mira Vista Country Club. Boy, we used to have a lot of fun there, maaan! We used to help ourselves to the food, to the booze, sometimes to the till.

JM: The golf carts? Remember we—

KH: Yeah, we used to swipe golf carts and ride 'em all over the fucking golf course.

JM: Remember there was that one in the front of the building on the top of the hill, that didn't run?

KH: Oh, yeah, yeah.

JM: And one night at midnight we rolled it down the hill with us in it? In the fog.

KH: Yeah. Didn't know where the hell we were going because we couldn't see because it's so foggy.

JM: And by then I had my driver's license, and I was driving my mom's car. So I drove my mom's car onto the golf course and pushed the golf cart back up, so nobody knew.

KH: Oh, yeah, that's right. That's right, yeah.

JM: And remember the snack shack?

KH: Yeah. Yeah, we used to go in there and pillage.

JM: And pillage. We'd get cases of Coca Cola and then sit in your room and drink Coca Cola and play guitar.

KH: Yeah, yeah, and play guitar. I remember one time when we went through a case of Coke in two days, you and me. A case of Coke. And our ritual when we were in high school, before Exodus, before we were in bands, was we would walk home to my house, drink a bunch of coke, eat pancakes—

JM: Oh, that's right! We'd throw ants on the griddle and watch 'em fry.

KH: –play guitar. We would load up on tons of sugar and play guitar!

JM: And you always had a louder amp than me so I always had to put my amp up on the shelf next to my ear so I could hear. I was so nervous, so shy I would never even be able to play leads.

KH: Yeah, I was like that for a short while myself. But then we all—

JM: Then you got into it, and I mean eventually I could do it, but back then I was like all, even just in front of you I was all scared to play leads and stuff.

KH: Yeah. I was, yeah. But I remember, I mean we would learn songs from records, the hard way.

JM: Oh, yeah.

KH: Picking up the needle. First playing the song, trying to learn it in the pass, and then picking up the needle, replacing it at the beginning of the song. Oh, so tedious.

JM: And I was lucky, my record player had a 16-speed on it, which is an octave down. It's half speed so I could play it at that slow speed.

KH: I wasn't so lucky. Mine would go backwards at any given time. It would start playing the record backwards. At any given moment I'd have to slam on it for it to like start going the proper way again.

JM: That's funny. That's funny.

JM: You remember we used to go to Meniketti's Music in Oakland?

KH: Oh, yeah. It sold amps, couches, furniture, PA equipment and guitars.

JM: And for the same price there was a Gibson SG or a Les Paul copy, and I was so into Ace Frehley and Jimmy Page that I had to have a Les Paul. So I got the Les Paul copy.

KH: And I would have done the same thing.

JM: So I, yeah, I had the Les Paul copy. And we'd sit in your room and play 'Cat Scratch Fever' and jam on licks and trade solos and stuff.

KH: Yeah. We played Zeppelin. And we played blues stuff. We played Montrose tunes, and UFO. When I first heard UFO I remember I said to you, "You gotta hear this, man. This guy Michael Schenker..."

JM: I specifically remember that moment, because you had that "Obsession" album. And you picked up the cover and said, "You gotta hear this band. This dude is amazing. And it's him, this is the guy whose picture's in the middle of the cover. And the rest of the guys are the band, but he's the one."

KH: That changed our lives, right there.

JM: That moment literally changed mine...

KH: ...my life too.

JM: And I still try and play like that—

KH: That was the template for what direction I wanted to take my guitar playing in. Loud, heavy, dynamic songs with dynamic guitar solos, you know, and a lot of melody. We proceeded to learn every single Michael Schenker solo. And I remember we would play 'em together, play 'em apart, and if there was only one guitar we would argue over the fucking guitar and start pulling on the neck.

JM: *(holding a guitar and laughing)* Which we're doing right now!!!

KH: Four hands on the neck, pulling! We played tug of war with the guitar, basically.

JM: I remember sitting up until three in the morning, in my room, with the record player so low I could hear the sound coming off the needle, learning this lick. *[plays the lick]*. My fingers were almost bleeding.

(There follows much discussion of UFO riffs played back in the day, including 'Rock Bottom' and 'Mother Mary,' as well as Kirk and John playing the actual riffs on tape – ED.)

KH: I was way, way, way into Schenker. You were way, way into Schenker and Eddie Van Halen. I was into Schenker and Hendrix and Beck.

JM: I remember first hearing Jeff Beck. That's when "Jeff Beck Live" with Jan Hammer came out, somewhere around there. That was a killer. And I remember listening to Van Halen, the first album, cranked on your dad's stereo in the living room.

KH: Yeah. And we blew that stereo up. I would turn it up so loud that you couldn't hear anything. It was almost, almost concert level.

JM: And one day your dad came home early.

KH: Yeah, came, he came home early and we were sitting there listening, and of course we couldn't hear him pull up or come in or hear him scream my name, because the music was so deafening. He just stood there and I...

JM: ...I remember he yelled, "I can hear that all the way down the block."

KH: ...And I just went white. And we were, what we were we playing? Zeppelin or something? But yeah, anyway, I've always had a special relationship with volume, whether listening or playing or whatever.

JM: Volume's cool.

KH: Yeah. Then I discovered that I could plug my guitar into my dad's stereo. One day I just got brave and I plugged it in, and hit a chord and it was super, super, super clean. It was so clean it was hurting my eardrums. And then, 'pop.' And there was silence. And I was like, "Aw, shit! I blew it up!" But then I figured out that it was only the fuse I blew. And I managed to get the fuse back in there before my dad found out.

JM: That's funny. And I think I bought that stereo from you at some point.

KH: You did.

JM: And then I gave it back to you.

KH: Yeah, I still have it.

JM: Yeah. It's a great sounding stereo. It was a Sony, or Pioneer. But yeah, so anyway you guys, so back to Exodus, and Mark Myrick came around, at some point.

KH: Yeah. Mark Myrick worked at Mira Vista Country Club too, and he became our first manager. And he was pretty savvy. I mean he would book a typical Eagles Hall like place, or civic centers, and print tickets and flyers up for Exodus, and there would always be a keg there. And people would come.

JM: And you guys would fill the place, with four or five hundred people.

KH: –five hundred people, yeah. This is Exodus. And this is before we had ever played a club, too.

JM: Yeah, it was before you guys were gigging in clubs and stuff.

KH: Yeah. Yeah.

Impossible SOLO

(10)	4	5	10	(10)	(6 7/8)	(5)	(3)
V	T	B	M	M2	LD	LM	P

Sm 57

5/2	10/0	7/5	10/3
150/5	1K/-4	150/5½	2K/-3

√50

F F
5- 5-

B&B's

7/3	10/1½	3/3	8/1
150/0	1K/+1	100/0	1K/-8

√100

F F
10
15-

Tubes

7/3	10/1½	7/3	10/1
150/2	1K/-8	150/2	1K/-8

√100

F F
5 5-

JM: Like at backyard parties.

KH: And we were actually making money. And—

JM: Tons. It was, like, $10 a shot.

KH: Yeah, and we spent it all on bad things. Never anything we needed.

JM: Well, some of it got spent on repairing the hall after the gig. The damage waiver or something.

KH: Yeah, I believe the first one was Jug Night in Crockett. And it was such a success that we had another one called the Ripper.

JM: That was in El Cerrito.

KH: Yeah, it was in El Cerrito, at Eagles Hall, right down the street...

JM: ...a block and a half from 3132 Carlson Boulevard where "Master of Puppets" was mostly written.

KH: Yeah. Yeah.

JM: That's funny.

KH: And we also played a few shows at Alvarado Park in San Pablo.

JM: Yeah, there's a picture...

KH: Yeah, that's where I'm wearing my hot tiger stripe shirt.

JM: Dave Meniketti shirt.

KH: Yeah, Dave Meniketti shirt. And I used to blow-dry my hair straight, but it would still curl.

JM: Yeah. I remember those gigs. What I remember was that I was still too nervous to play in front of people...

KH: Me too!!!

JM: I was always more into the technical stuff anyway. So I'd go to your gigs and tune your guitars and stuff. And that's where all that started for me, working for you guys, because it was just like, "All right, this is where I fit in, this is what I do." I remember I used to tear apart my mom's record player, trying to figure out how it worked and stuff. And that's how I knew how to tune a guitar, that sort of stuff and because I'd been playing for a while.

KH: All right (addressing you, dear reader), I have a confession to make. When I first started playing guitar and John and I were hanging out, John used to have to tune my guitar for me because I couldn't tune it. Remember?

JM: Yeah.

KH: You used to have to tune my guitar for me because I didn't quite work out how to tune my guitar in the beginning.

JM: You got it now.

KH: But eventually I got it, like, last year sometime!!! But it's funny, it is ironic because that was like an omen for what you would be doing for me for, like, the next ten years or something!

JM: I know, it was funny.

KH: Because you were my tech and James's tech and Cliff's tech, you know, at various times.

(There is a short conversation while the tape is flipped. When we return, the two are talking about old East Bay Exodus shows—ED.)

KH: We used to have these theme shows. One was called Jug Night.

JM: And the Ripper.

KH: Yeah. It was right before we got *(Paul)* Baloff and we'd also play with a lot of local bands like Blind Illusion.

JM: And then you guys started playing the Keystone—or no, did you ever play the Keystone Berkeley?

KH: Yeah. As Exodus we also played the Old Waldorf a few times, the Mab a few times, the Stone a few times...

JM: Somewhere in there, me, you, and Gary Holt were in a music theory class.

KH: Oh, yeah, Contra Costa Junior College. I remember that. I think, oh, I was there for like the first week and then I bailed, man.

JM: I bailed like a few weeks after.

KH: I got a job. I needed to buy some equipment.

JM: I remember sitting in the class trying to listen and Gary *(Holt)* just yapping the whole time about guitars.

KH: Yeah, I bailed. I got out of there.

JM: And then I remember going to a party one night, and you coming out and going, "Dude, I gotta tell you something. You can't tell anyone." And I said, "What? What's up?" And you said, "Metallica wants me to fly to New York and join them. I think it's a joke. I think Mark Whitaker's *(Bay Area producer who worked with the early Metallica)* trying to play a joke on me." And then a week later, we were boxing up your amp with cardboard so you could ship it on the plane with you to New York.

KH: Yeah, that was back in the good old days when you used to be able to check in Marshall cabinets.

JM: Yeah.

KH: And Marshall heads, and they would arrive—

JM: Wrapped in cardboard, and just arrive okay, yeah.

KH: It would arrive! For some reason the airlines were a lot of more forgiving back then. Life was so simple back then...*(returns to discussing Exodus and parties)*. So, yeah, we were playing all these shows and then we were at a party one time, and I saw this guy who looked like he might be into metal. He had hair past his shoulders. Kinda looked like a troll. And I said, "What's your name, man?" He goes, "Paul." I go, "Paul what?" and he goes, "Paul

Baloff." I go, "Right ON, man. You're into metal, aren't you?" And he goes, "Fuck, YEAH, I'm into metal. I'm so into metal. I'm full of metal." And I said, "Hey, man, have you heard UFO?" He goes, "Fuck YEAH man, I love UFO," and he started singing 'Rock Bottom' to me, you know? I then asked him, "Have you ever heard of Iron Maiden?" He goes, "I LOVE Maiden. I love ALL those bands. I KNOW all those bands." And I said, "All right, man. I'm in a band, and we're looking for a singer. I think you should be in our band." He goes, "All right!" And we had finally found a singer in Paul Baloff. I asked him to join the band on the spot. Little did I know that I kinda asked for a bit more than I thought I did. Paul was amazing, had an amazing persona, onstage and offstage. We would live for drinking 'til we couldn't walk, and listening to metal, Venom, Mercyful Fate, and Motörhead in particular.

(At this point, Kirk and John realize they're leaping forward a little too fast and decide to rewind a bit back to 1979/1980—ED.)

KH: ...we should pick it up somewhere around 1979, 1980. Around the time the first Maiden album came out when we really started like noticing that the music we were into was an underground thing that not a whole lot of people knew about. We should go into that a little bit. I remember the first time hearing Mercyful Fate demos, same with Yngwie (Malmsteen, the furious fire-fingered fret meister of the era!!! – nostalgic cheesy ED) demos.

JM: I remember the Yngwie demos, and the "Yngwie is God" tape. I still have those tapes somewhere.

KH: Yeah.

JM: And then he finally came over to the US and played. I remember seeing him at the Waldorf with Steeler.

KH: Yeah, Mike Varney brought him over, and we couldn't believe that the guy who we were so into, who was on the other side of the world, was suddenly in the Bay Area and playing shows. We all went. Yngwie is god. He was pretty much the first time we heard someone from our generation play that style of guitar.

JM: Richie Blackmore.

KH: Yeah, Richie Blackmore. Other than that, a bunch of jazz guys! Those two were the only guys ripping arpeggios like that.

JM: I was more into Zeppelin and Kiss and—

KH: You were more into the more hard rock stuff. I definitely was into the metal. And back then, heavy metal was looked on as kinda dirty because the people listening to it wore leather and in fact leather was associated with, you know—

JM: Rebellion.

KH: Yeah, rebellion! But particularly in the Bay Area, maybe like in an S&M sort of thing too, you know, because we were wearing the studded leather wristbands and stuff. And people were like looking at us longhaired freaks wearing black leather jackets and wearing wristbands and thinking, "What is this? Are they into some like S&M thing, are they gay?"

JM: "Are they Castro or something?"

KH: "Are they getting freaky? What's up with them?" We had to endure a lot of abuse.

JM: It was cool though because...

KH: ...we were getting all the chicks. At least I was.

JM: But it was like this cool, secret thing that people didn't want to know about because the music was so loud and rock and metal was intense. People just didn't want to hear it so they kind of just let it go by. But it was like being in a secret little club that no one wanted to know about, and no one cared about. It was cool because everybody got along pretty well and it wasn't like a back-stab thing. Especially in the Bay Area where everybody went to the same gigs. I think there was definitely a Berkeley crowd and a San Francisco crowd and probably a San Jose crowd but you saw the same people, and everybody was really cool.

KH: It was a good scene. It was a really, really good scene back then. And there were a lot of good bands around. But getting back to the whole metal thing, I mean slowly metal got more popular. MTV started showing Motley Crüe videos and people thought Motley Crüe was heavy metal. You know, WE would never consider them heavy metal. They didn't sound like Maiden or Motörhead!!!

JM: I have a vivid memory when MTV started, they would play Black Sabbath and stuff on MTV.

KH: I remember seeing Saxon on early MTV, and I was like, all right.

JM: Remember after you joined Metallica and did that Raven tour and came back, and then we went back to the East Coast, and we were staying at Metal Joe's house which is where we started watching MTV? In '83?

KH: Yeah. '83/'84. They didn't have much of a format then. It wasn't so compartmentalized. Metal started getting more populated, slowly, and then when Metallica hit the scene and when I joined the band, I mean metal was at full saturation mode. Bands like Def Leppard and Iron Maiden and Judas Priest were having gold, platinum albums running by that time. And as you know, our particular brand of music was considered a bit more extreme back then. "Kill 'Em All" was considered very extreme, non-commercial, you know, very underground sort of, like, 'massive middle finger.'

JM: I remember hearing Slayer on that same trip. It was me, Mark Whitaker, and Dave Marrs. Dave had the Slayer tape, and it was sooo fast. It was way faster than "Kill 'Em All" and stuff. But now I hear it and I go, "Oh, that's sort of medium speed."

KH: Yeah.

JM: It's funny.

KH: I remember when I first heard 'Overkill' by Motörhead I thought it was one of the fastest songs I'd ever heard. But nowadays that's fairly pedestrian, because you have the blast beats from bands like Napalm Death and Anal Cunt. They're like total speed, super fast, blurring almost. It'd be great if I could play so fast that it's just like a hum. My wrist starts humming like a hummingbird. That's how fast I wanna be able to play.

(There follows a short discussion on how tough that would actually be before

John returns discussion to Kirk's early employment—ED.)

JM: Right at the end of high school you started working at, like, Burger King and the Mira Vista and stuff. I forgot, what other jobs did you have?

KH: I worked in a paint warehouse with Gary Holt and Jeff Andrews. And boy, did we have a lot of fun there. And Tom Hunting. And that place basically bankrolled the band for about two or three months, it was great.

JM: You were getting paid some astronomical amount, like $6 or $7 an hour or something?

KH: Yeah, which was a lot back then. Back then minimum wage was $2...

JM: ...seventy-five.

KH: Something like that. And we were getting six bucks an hour.

JM: I know. I remember that.

KH: Couldn't believe it. We spent that really fast, on bad things. But aaaaannnyway. I worked at Burger King just long enough to be able to afford a Marshall cabinet, and I bought a Marshall cabinet, and then quit. And then I worked at the paint warehouse, and then I worked at Oakland Army Base, in their warehouse. And I did that for about six months, until it drove me crazy, and I quit, and just said, "Fuck it, I'm just gonna try and make a living playing music."

JM: I remember you used to tell me back then, "I'm gonna go to London. I'm gonna go to London and try and make it, just like Jimi Hendrix did..."

KH: I had plans. I had a 10 year plan—

JM: You gotta have a plan.

KH: It was very distinct. I remember when I first started, I said if I'm not successful in 10 years I'm gonna hang it up. But by 10 years, we were already working for "...And Justice For All!"

And then I, I don't know, something happened and started listening to, yeah, Yngwie, and then I met Joe Satriani. He was giving guitar lessons and like all the metal guys were going to him and coming back with like monster chops overnight. I was like, oh, yeah?

JM: Need to check this out.

KH: And so I went to go see these guys who were students of his. One guy actually works at GIT now, down south, Danny Gill. And you know, Danny Gill was an amazing player, still is to this day. I have a bunch of instructional videos of him. And so I managed to get this guy's number, this guitar teacher's number and it's Joe Satriani, and I started taking lessons from him. Sometimes I would bike out there.

JM: From El Sobrante?

KH: Yeah.

JM: Wow.

KH: And ride my ten-speed from El Sobrante to Berkeley, which is a good 20, 25 miles or something. But I would do it, you know. It would take me, you know, three or four hours, but I would fucking do it.

JM: Yeah.

KH: I would get there, I'd show up all sweaty. And I go, "Hey, Joe, how you doing? Can I play this guitar?" And I would play guitar with Joe for about an hour or so.

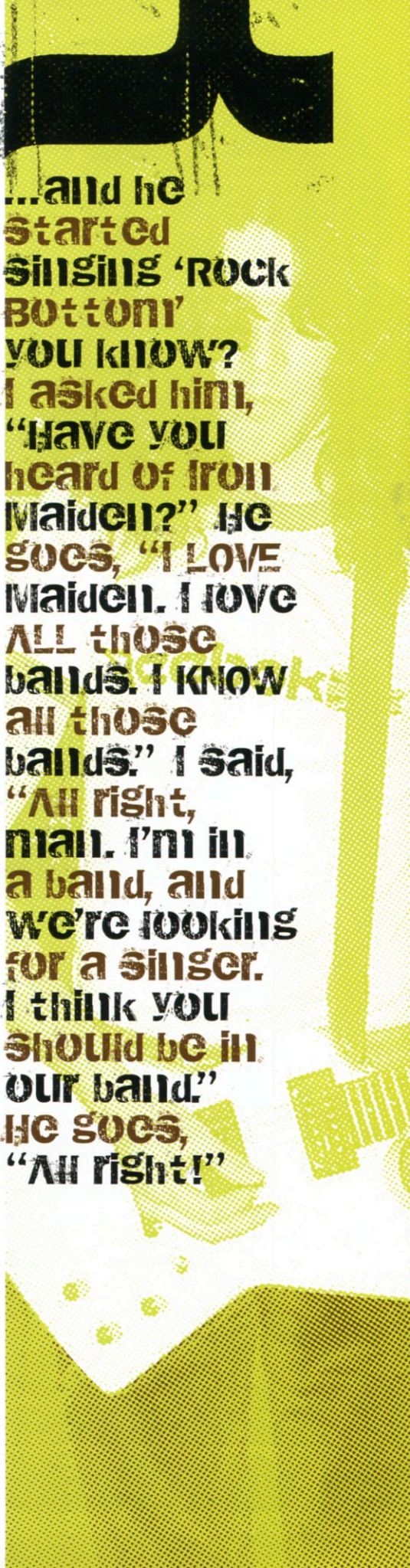
JM: And then ride home.

KH: And ride home. I had gotten like four or five lessons from him, and then I got the call to join Metallica. I hadn't taken that many lessons from him, you know, before I joined Metallica, only about four or five. But it was in April of 1983, I got the phone call, and I remember at that time Exodus was on hiatus. Mark Whitaker asked, called me and asked me to come out and you know, play with the band. And I thought it was some weird April fool's joke, you know, because it was the first of April. But Whittaker said "No, this is for real. I'm gonna send you out the demo," and okay. So, got the demo, and—

JM: And we all know that story about Dave *(Mustaine)* and the bus ride *(back to California)*, and—

KH: And maybe that would be a good place to pick it up next time, right when I join the band...

END OF PART ONE



BRIAN LEW TELLS YOU HOW IT WAS. READ, LEARN, ENJOY.

WANTED: HEADBANGERS from anywhere; England, Europe, Japan, Canada, US to trade tapes and/or photos. I'm heavily into Sabbath, Scorps, Maiden, Y&T, Priest, Electric Sun, Saxon, etc. Also, think Ocean, Jaguar, Blitzkrieg, Bitches Sin, Grim Reaper and Holocaust are a cut above the rest. All letters will be answered, include list if possible.
Brian Lew, [redacted]
Sunnyvale, California 94086, USA.

I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING METALLICA SINCE DAY ONE. Understand that I'm not saying that to gloat or brag. I only say it because I'm amazed by that fact, and that when Steffan asked if I'd like to contribute something to So What! it was like a circle that has spanned 24 years of my life was being completed.

Being a headbanger in the U.S. during the early '80's took a lot of effort since most of the good bands and all of the good music magazines were in Europe. I gleaned all of my Metal information from Sounds and then Kerrang! in the beginning. I'd have to travel over an hour from my parents' house in Sunnyvale, CA up to Concord, CA to visit a record store called The Record Exchange that, for whatever reason, specialized in European Metal imports. In later years I heard a rumor that the owner was actually using the store to launder drug money, but that's another story you won't read here. It was through The Record Exchange that I became friends with other San Francisco Bay Area Metal fans and I realized there were more people like me "out there."

To clarify who "people like me" were: we HATED bands like Motley Crüe, Twisted Sister, and Quiet Riot. They were too weak for our taste. Our Metal heroes were Motörhead, Iron Maiden, and the other underground New Wave Of British Heavy Metal bands like Venom. You wanted heavy? They gave you heavy.

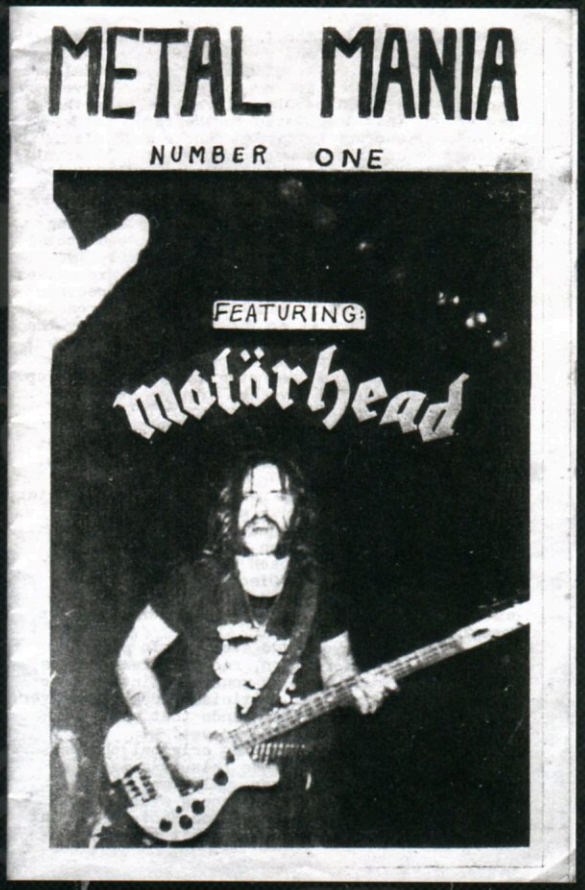
Having limited access to all of the new European Metal was frustrating. Of course, there was no e-mail, text messaging, or Skype back then and long distance phone calls were too expensive for a teenager like me. The only realistic way to communicate with other headbangers outside of the Bay Area was by mail. Eventually I ran a pen-pal ad in Kerrang!.

I was surprised by the avalanche of responses I received from all over the world, especially from such Metal strongholds as England and Holland. I started corresponding with other Metal fans in those faraway lands and we wrote letters telling each other about shows we'd seen, sent xeroxed copies of our tape lists, and traded concert

THE OLD DAYS

PHOTOS BY BRIAN LEW UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

After show partying in San Francisco, 11/29/82.



Covers from early-'80's metal fanzines Northwest Metal and Metal Mania.

merchandise from our respective countries. It would take weeks to communicate back and forth, but the effort was always worth it. I remember once trading a 1980 Van Halen tour shirt for some vintage Black Sabbath items. Evidently the Europeans felt the same way about American rock bands as I did about their new Metal bands. Besides the Europeans, I also received letters from like-minded American headbangers such as K.J. Doughton, Ron Quintana, and Brian Slagel.

THE FIRST THING I EVER WROTE AND HAD PUBLISHED was a review of Metallica's first show in San Francisco for K.J. Doughton's fanzine Northwest Metal. Prior to the show, K.J. had sent me the 'No Life Til Leather' demo after he had received it from a guy in Los Angeles named Patrick Scott. Of course, longtime time fans know that K.J. also ran the original Metallica Fan Club from 1983-87 out of his parents' basement in Oregon. The joke has always been that K.J. and I were Metallica fans #5 and #6. At the time, you could literally count and name all of the band's fans like that.

After that first review of mine was printed in Northwest Metal, Metallica returned to play San Francisco a month later and I was surprised when James introduced 'Motorbreath' with something I wrote in that review ("We're going to slow it down to Mach 10 for the love song..."). The show at The Old Waldorf also happened to fall on my 19th birthday and the band recorded the show through the soundboard and dedicated 'Metal Militia' to me. Yes, it was a good birthday and I still have that tape.

I soon became friends with Ron Quintana and wrote for his legendary fanzine Metal Mania. The thing I liked the most about Ron's 'zine was its sense of humor; he was ahead of his time, incorporating 60's and 70's kitsch into his layouts. He would have a rave review of the new Venom single, or an informative history of Uli Roth and the Scorpions, and on the next page would be some old trading cards showing The Partridge Family "on tour." In order to cut costs after its first 7 issues, Metal Mania went from being xeroxed to being printed cheap newsprint with cheaper ink, the joke being how much of the said ink would come off on your fingers while you read it.

I eventually put out a fanzine of my own with a friend named Sam Kress. We called it Whiplash after my favorite Metallica song. The debut issue featured the first interview with James and Lars after they arrived in New York to record "Kill 'Em All." Unfortunately, only one issue of Whiplash was ever published, but Sam and I had fun while it lasted. Although Metal was a serious calling, it ultimately was all about having fun and hanging out with friends.

And that's perhaps the hardest thing for me to articulate to people, the sense of community there was in the Bay Area Metal Scene. The audiences at those early Metal shows were different; there was no moshing or crowd surfing yet. Crushing forward towards the stage and headbanging was how we showed our appreciation. I honestly can't remember

Brian's own fanzine, Whiplash, and an ad for then metal specialists The Record Vault.

any fights happening at those early shows; the aggression the crowd generated wasn't directed at each other. We were a band of brothers united under one cause: M-E-T-A-L.

Because of that, in the Bay Area, Metallica weren't simply a band. They were "one of us." If they weren't playing gigs, they were at the gigs. If they weren't having a party, they were at the party. Once James and Lars moved up to the Bay Area we'd run into them in the crowd at shows, on public transit, on the street, at the grocery store, at parties, or at the HQ of S.F. Metal, a record store called The Record Vault on Polk Street. If I happened to be in the East Bay I'd stop at the house on Carlson Avenue in El Cerrito where James and Lars lived to see if they were around.

Metallica were also regulars on Ron Quintana's Rampage Radio show on KUSF (which just celebrated its 24th Anniversary!). A memorable appearance, which I still have on cassette somewhere, featured a drunk Lars impersonating Slayer's Kerry King. As with Metal Mania, Ron's already-mentioned kitschy humor was on proud display during Rampage, when he'd do things like play a cut from a Mister Rogers children's record leading into a song by Samhain or Metallica.

I REMEMBER CATCHING TWO OF METALLICA'S SOON-TO-BE LEGENDS with their old bands back then. I saw Kirk perform with Exodus at least two or three times, one of those shows being at The Stone in San Francisco when they supported Metallica in March 1983. I was taking photos down at the front and snapped some of Kirk. After the show he saw me and came over to shake my hand for taking his picture (HA!), which was the first time I met him. I also saw Cliff perform with Trauma when they opened for Saxon in March 1982 in Palo Alto. Cliff performed a bass solo that included playing slide using a drinking glass. A slide solo on bass?! We were blown away. As they were leaving the stage I shouted at Cliff and stuck out my hand out and he shook it. Fast forward to January 1983, and I was invited over to the Carlson Avenue house to see the band jam with their new bassist. It was Cliff's first rehearsal with the band and Metallica's discography consisted of two demo tapes.

In hindsight, the magnitude of that afternoon is pretty amazing. For the record, there were six other people there to witness the event. The equipment was set up in the living room of the small two bedroom house. The drum kit was set up in front of the couch. All of the other furniture had been cleared to make room for the amps. For most of the session I kneeled on the couch behind Lars and snapped pictures with my trusty Canon AV-1. Afterwards I took the very first pictures of the band with their new bassist.

WHEN "KILL 'EM ALL" WAS RELEASED it was a huge moment for all of us S.F. Metal fans. On the day it was released we all went to The Record Vault to buy our copies. Personally, Metallica was the first band I ever knew who put an album out. An entire album! On a "real" record label! Wow.

THE OLD DAYS

Dave Mustaine & Cliff Burton at Cliff's first rehearsal with Metallica in 1982.

Brian Lew and James Hetfield demonstrate air guitar, done El Cerrito style, circa 1983.

Cliff with Ruthie's gang, 1984. Photo by Harold O.

Then articles and reviews about the band began appearing in publications like Sounds, Aardschock, and Kerrang!. It was all kind of surreal; our friends were becoming famous. I have a vivid memory of reading Steffan's Metallica piece in Sounds circa 1984 and being amazed that Metallica were in the hallowed pages of that legendary publication.

When the band was in Copenhagen recording "Ride The Lightning" I called them at Sweet Silence Studios from a pay phone using a phone card that wasn't mine. I ended up talking to James and Cliff for well over an hour and they were very happy to talk to someone back home. I sent them a package of recent bootlegs and demo tapes soon after that call; a Metal care package of sorts. Ah... RTL...sitting here...more memories...

...When they then made it home on the "Ride The Lightning" tour, some of the original fans were outraged that they had recorded a ballad ('Fade To Black'). Personally I liked the song a lot (although 'Creeping Death' was my favorite on the album), but my buddies needed to protest their outrage. So, at all three of the Bay Area shows (Palo Alto and two shows in San Francisco) some of them broke out hankies during 'Fade' and waved them during the song. I can still see Cliff's face when he saw the hankies at the Palo Alto show and the pissed off expression he had on his face. Free speech for the dumb!

Then there was the night Mercyful Fate made their San Francisco debut in 1984 at the Kabuki Theater. Prior to the encore King Diamond summoned Metallica to the stage. Like good headbangers Cliff, Lars, and James made their way through the crowd and climbed up onstage to air guitar during the final song, much to the delight of the crowd. I can still hear King Diamond saying "Laahhrs! Vhere are youu??!!" No way to survive this evil night.

And casting the memory hook back a bit further (but with great relation to RTL), during the time when the band was home after the "Kill 'Em All" tour I was talking to Lars on the phone. We both had our televisions tuned to the same channel and a scene from the movie Never Cry Wolf was being shown. As we were talking the main character fell through a frozen lake and Lars said something like "That would suck..." and I said something like "Trapped under ice... That would be a cool song title." and Lars said something like "Hmmm." A true story, which I'm sure Lars does not remember but I stand behind it as fact...

When the band started getting popular it was like we were taking the world over with them. The Bay Area Metal scene was validated. In 1985 when Iron Maiden played the Cow Palace in San Francisco, my friends and I ran into James in the crowd after the show; Metallica had just completed the "Ride The Lightning" U.S. tour a week or so before. While we were chatting with James, some kids came up to him and asked for his autograph. After James finished his Rock Star duty, we teased him about it; I think we asked him to sign our asses. That was the vibe around Metallica. They were the anti-Rock Stars. They were one of us.

Of course, when the Metallica war machine started conquering the world things changed.

Cliff and Lars in shots taken at Cliff's first rehearsal, 1982.

WE SAW LESS AND LESS OF THEM SINCE THEY WERE ON TOUR SO MUCH. Friendships ran their course and faded away, and I don't mean that in a negative way; it's just how things happen sometimes. Metallica were like friends who went off to war. While we all stayed at home, the boys went off to foreign lands and conquered them. They were gone a long time and when they got back they had been changed by their experiences.

For a brief time, James, Cliff, and their accomplices performed a few Spastik Children shows in S.F. and Berkeley. These were entertaining only because people would show up expecting a Metallica set and instead were given drunken excuses for songs like 'Let Me Flush.' Some got the joke, others didn't. Oh well.

Sadly, things happened and everything changed.

I found out about Cliff's passing via a phone call from Dave Marrs, who was a member of Metallica's road crew from their earliest days through the "Ride The Lightning" tour. For me, that's when the fun ended and I hung up my denim vest. I moved on to other things and other interests away from Metal.

I still bought the new Metallica albums, kept tabs on what they were doing, and rooted for them as they became the Rock Gods we know today, but they basically became part of my past.

Then, as the years rolled on, I got back in touch with some people from the Old Metal Days and rekindled those friendships. I also found myself in contact with people in the Metallica camp like Vickie and Steffan; what goes around comes around. Or, as Buckaroo Banzai said, "No matter where you go, there you are."

That phrase was never more appropriate than at the Day On The Green show at Oakland Stadium in October 1991. It was Metallica's biggest hometown gig ever and I decided to go for old time's sake. That was the day when I was pulled back into the Metallica World like I was Michael Corleone ("Just when I thought that I was out they pull me back in."). During the course of the day I ran into many old friends who I hadn't seen in years; the show was like a high school reunion and I reconnected with a lot of people as a result. From that day on I wasn't far from the Metallica camp again.

At the height of the Napster controversy an old friend (Ian Kallen, who also wrote for Metal Mania back in the day) asked me to write a piece about Metallica vs. Napster for the website Salon.com. After it was posted I received a phone call from Cliff Bernstein. He wanted to talk about my piece and say how much he appreciated its perspective. Of course, I was flattered and he had no idea about my history with the band. It was one of those moments when I realized Metallica were still part of my life whether I wanted them to be or not.

And so they continue to be, in the process providing me with more memories to add to those golden oldies. A funny incident happened when my wife and I attended the MTV Reload / Rehearse / Request taping in 1998. The session was done in a warehouse space in San Francisco and as the invited audience entered they were ushered to various seats

James at The Record Vault, 1983. That's a Men At Work record. Photo by Wayne Vanderkuil.

around the space. Ironically, my wife and I were seated on a road case that was at such an angle that every time the camera showed James singing, my face was just over his shoulder. The next day I received messages from many friends who had seen the broadcast and recognized me. No matter where you go, there you are.

I WILL ADMIT THAT AT MANY TIMES OVER THE YEARS I'VE DOUBTED WHETHER THE BAND STILL REMEMBERED, OR EVEN APPRECIATED, THE OLD METAL DAYS. They've done everything, accomplished everything, so why care about their roots anymore? Then they would do something that made me think they do still care, at least on some level. Such as:

+ When they performed an acoustic version of Diamond Head's 'Helpless' at the 1997 Bridge Benefit.
+ When they opened their set with the San Francisco Symphony by playing 'Call Of Ktulu.'
+ When they recorded 'Mercyful Fate' on the "Garage Inc." album.

It's probably why my favorite Metallica album is "Garage Inc." because of its wink-and-a-nod to their roots and to the Old Metal Days. When I saw the track listing and listened to the album for the first time I had a smile on my face from start to finish. Name another multi-platinum, future Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame inductee who has covered Mercyful Fate!

But really, the greatest legacy of those Metal Days for me isn't just Metallica or the music. It's the friendships that I made back then that exist to this day.

My old Metal buddies and I are grown up, work in widely diverse areas, live all over the globe, and we no longer live and breathe Metal (WHAT?!), but we're still bonded by those early days with Metallica. No matter where you go, there you are.

When I think back I'm struck by how innocent everything was back in The Old Metal Days. Spend three days dubbing cassettes for a friend in Holland? Sure! Spend two hours driving to pick up the new Venom 7" single? Of course!

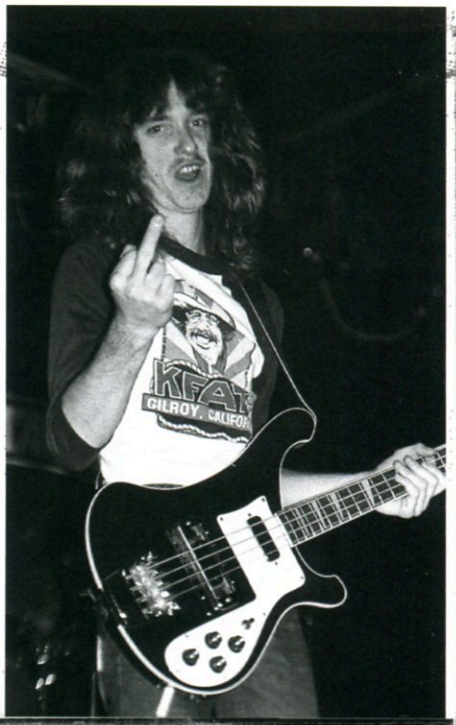
And with that in mind, I think my favorite Metallica moment has nothing to do with hanging out with them or a specific gig or event...it was when I watched the Metallica episode of Behind The Music.

During one of the interview segments, James recalled how at an early San Francisco show, the Metallica fans down at the front turned their backs on the opening band in an expression of disgust. Those fans were my mates and I, many of whom I'm still in touch with today. For the record, the offensively bad opening act was a local S.F. band called Hans Naughty **(outrageously dodgy semi-hair-farming bunch of lightweights— ED)**.

The fact that James remembered the incident after all these years made me realize that underneath all of the fame, fortune, and celebrity, Metallica does still remember those innocent youthful early days when all that mattered to us was M-E-T-A-L.

M.U.Y.A.

First show in San Francisco, 9/18/1982.



First gig with Cliff, The Stone, San Francisco, 3/5/83.

THE OLD DAYS

The Keystone, Palo Alto, CA, Halloween, 1983.

Master of Puppets

The Round-Table Discussion

Interview by Steffan Chirazi
Photos by Jeff Yeager

Amidst some furious preparations for the summer festival dates, Lars, James, Kirk and Rob carved some time out between riffs, rehearsals and lunch to chat with SW! about the whole "Master of Puppets" 20th Anniversary. There were certainly a few interesting revelations as the discussion unfolded over a 35-45 minute period at the HQ dining table, with Lars' younger son Layne presiding over the linguistics to make sure we didn't get too rude with our conversation.

The conversation opens with your editor laughing about Layne's earlier comments on a couple of "Puppets" songs being favorites of his, and Lars explaining how that has come to be... pressing 'RECORD' NOW!

SC: All righty...*(band assembles around the HQ dining table)*...So, thanks for making the time, appreciate it, and I'll plow straight in. Looking back, "Master of Puppets" always feels like it was a brother to "Ride the Lightning," the same way as "Load" and "Reload." Is that where you feet it came from?

LU: That's a great question—

KH: It was written and recorded at the same place.

LU: I would say that for me it's a continuation. I don't know what family dynamic you want to call that. You know, if anything it would be more like a big brother even though "Ride the Lightning" is older, because to me it felt like "Master of Puppets" was an expansion and continuation of the ideas that were introduced on "Ride the Lightning," the main ones really being adding melody and adding a much broader scope to the whole thing that Cliff and Kirk had brought in. Remember Cliff and Kirk were not part of the writing process of "Kill 'Em All." So you know, what they brought in and introduced with their musical abilities, and especially Cliff's whole sense of harmonies and that whole schooling that me and James were completely oblivious to, to me it fulfilled everything that had been introduced on "Ride the Lightning."

JH: I think "Ride..." and "...Puppets" are twins, and "Kill 'Em All" is separate, it's like the demo y'know? It was the demo of us, and "Ride..." was kinda like the first real band album, you know, all of us contributing together. And then "...Puppets" was even deeper into what we had touched on in "Ride."

KH: You know, I've always said this and I still feel this, I really think that "Master of Puppets" was the nadir of that lineup. It was all four of us really gelling because we had all had been in the band, had been through a lot of, you know, different situations and circumstances and toured and lived together, and we were really just gelling well as people and as musicians. And I think that had a lot to do with it, too. We were comfortable with each other, and we had reached the level of comfort that we hadn't really reached at that point yet with each other.

SC: Was that the last record that Metallica made with that sort of wonderful freedom of youth? You know what I mean, where there's no thoughts of future, no thoughts of anything. You're just doing it really, really for the moment and there's no fears, there's nothing built in? Yes, no?

LU: I can't correlate that to the making of "Master Of Puppets." I mean hav-

ELEKTRA
METALLICA
MASTER OF PUPPETS
SIDE ONE
℗ 1986 Elektra/Asylum Records
R-134552
60439-1
STEREO
1. BATTERY (5:10)
Hetfield - Ulrich
2. MASTER OF PUPPETS (8:36)
Hetfield - Ulrich - Burton - Hammett
3. THE THING THAT SHOULD NOT BE (6:32)
Hetfield - Ulrich - Hammett
4. WELCOME HOME (SANITARIUM) (6:28)
Hetfield - Ulrich - Hammett
All songs published by Creeping Death Music, ASCAP
PRODUCED BY METALLICA & FLEMMING RASMUSSEN
MIXED BY MICHAEL WAGENER
STE 60439 1 A SP
MFG. BY ELEKTRA/ASYLUM/NONESUCH RECORDS 75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10019 9229 SUNSET BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90069 A DIVISION OF

Kirk Hammett

Master of Puppets

Was the zenith of that line-up. It was all four of us really selling because we had toured and lived together, and we were selling well as people and as musicians.

ing done, you know, a dozen interviews about this record in the last couple, three months, whatever you were just describing, it's not something that I can correlate a direct thing to. You can always write with these types of stories, you can always write a parallel story that says, OK, "...the success of 'Master of Puppets'" and the fact that on the last day of the Ozzy tour, Cliff Bernstein sat us down and says, "Now you can all afford to buy a house..." do you know what I mean? And you can always sit down and come up with some sort of parallel story to that too, but at the end of the day I think it's much more labor than we need to expend. And I certainly don't feel, you know, some sort of huge division between "Master of Puppets" and all the albums which have come since. I mean, I think when we started on "...And Justice for All" with Jason in the band, in the garage, overcoming the tragedy, there was a lot of spunk and a lot of that youthful energy vibe too. So no, I don't think that in any way ended up with "...Puppets."

SC: OK. I mean, well, I certainly wouldn't have said 'ended,' more just the end of, you know, youthful innocence, I guess is what I'm getting at.

JH: Well, to me it's, there's always a youthful innocence on looking back on anything.

SC: Good point. That's a great point.

JH: Whether it's any album, or a time in your life, or everything, hindsight is always easier to look at, like, "man, it was so simple back then." It's just because you choose to make your life complicated at the moment. And yeah, if you look back at "Master of Puppets" you think, man, we had nothing to worry about, and all of this, and—

LU: Except when you say that, and "Master of Puppets" in Copenhagen, and we were five months there making it going fuck, God, I wish we were back in Rochester recording "Kill 'Em All" (when it was easy)!!!

JH: Exactly. And we'll be saying that ten years from now about this record, you know? That's kinda how it is. And that's a great awareness to have, and it helps you kind of defuse the insanity of the moment and remember that this is supposed to be about fun, and not worry about what's supposed to happen at what time, and "oh, God, we have to do this record better than the last one" and all of that.

SC: Sure, right. Right.

LU: I mean you gotta remember it was a very different recording experience, because it was the first time we made a record with a major label. You gotta remember that "Ride The Lightning" was still cut from the old Megaforce days, and so on. With "Master of Puppets," the reason we went back to Denmark was because the studio rates and the currency exchange worked out, five months in Denmark was like—

JH: (grinning) We did it just because we loved it.

LU: —luxury. I mean, you know what I mean?

SC: Can we have a comment on five months in Denmark from the non-Danes?

KH: Lars loved it!!!

LU: It became a very, it was the first time when we made a record where it was just like, "OK, do your thing." And when I say that, I mean looking back two years before to "Kill 'Em All," or "Ride the Lightning" and realizing that "Master of Puppets" was fucking "St. Anger" compared to that in terms of the experience... because we're sitting in Denmark. Everybody was miserable, it was the middle of winter. It was pretty dark for five months, you know, and everybody wanted to go home.

SC: Well, break it down. First of all, economics being what they are, okay, you ended up in Denmark, and for "Ride the Lightning—"

KH: We were staying at the SAS Hotel.

SC: But I mean first of all, why Denmark in the first place, even on "Ride the Lightning?" I mean why would you go, was it because it was familiar to you?

KH: Well, economics. Economics, completely. Well, not completely.

LU: "Ride the Lightning," real quick, it was simply because at that time, flying everybody back and forth over the Atlantic was too expensive. So we had a tour coming up, the Music From Nations tour with Exciter and The Rods...

SC: I remember that!

LU: ...so in order to slot the recording of "Ride the Lightning," you had to do

these European tours. We simply had to stay over there. That was simple. Then moving on, in the summer of 1985 Flemming Rasmussen came over to LA and me and James went and met him down in LA, and we spent two weeks in LA driving around listening to Huey Lewis' 'Power of Love' and the Martin Luther King song by U2, and we went through the studios, looking for a studio to record the "Master of Puppets" record. And we couldn't find a studio in LA after two weeks that we liked as much as Sweet Silence. And all the studios in LA were like two, three thousand dollars a day. And at that time, the mantra was, 'as much studio time as possible.' And we realized we could go back to Sweet Silence for twice as long for half the price. And then I'm sure Flemming kind of had something to do with that.

JH: And privacy, too. Every studio we went into, there were six other bands, you know, and poking their head in. "Dude, what's going on?" you know? Like, "get out!!!"

KH?: "What are you guys working on?"

JH: "Get out, please." I mean we discovered that when we came and mixed it, in LA.

SC: Was "Master Of Puppets" written in the studio? Did you go there with songs already written? When did they first start to come to life? Were they written on the previous tour, were they...

KH: In the garage.

LU: Yeah, in the garage in El Cerrito. You know, we did the "Ride the Lightning" tour, the US leg between January and March of '85. And then we took a month off, me and James went on the road with Deep Purple for a week, and —

KH: Got beaten up!

LU: I was thinking about that today...

SC: What's that? With Deep Purple in 1985? Come on, man.

KH: I walked into hotel room and both of them looked like they had gotten into brawls the next day. I was like, what the hell happened to you guys?

JH: Was that in Seattle?

LU: Yeah, Seattle. Remember me, you, and Skitchy? (Rich 'Banger' Burch, an old friend of the guys, a fellow metal lover and the originator of the phrase 'Bang that head which doesn't bang' that sits proudly on the back of "Kill 'Em All..." he sadly passed away in 1992 – ED.)

JH: Yeah. I remember that.

KH: They went to go with Deep Purple and they got beaten up by Deep Purple.

LU: I remembered this this morning, because I fell asleep last night with VH1 on. When I woke up this morning, Pantera was on. So we went on the road with Deep Purple for a week and then we met these guys in this up-and-coming band in Dallas called Pantera. And then we had these free tickets from some canceled plane flights, and me and James' vacation was a week with Deep Purple and a week in Dallas with Pantera. And then after that we went back to work. We flew back to El Cerrito and went to work on "Master of Puppets" in mid-April, maybe? And we were writing in the same garage where we wrote "...Lighting." And that went on for the better part of three months over the summer. That was the Live Aid summer. You know, everything was about

CHROME
ARROWHEAD

Live Aid, summer of '85? And then we had pretty much all the songs written. We did Donington, and we did Day on the Green. And then we flew over and started tracking in Copenhagen.

SC: So they were all ready to go when you went over?

LU: Yeah. Well, except for one thing. We went over to start tracking in Copenhagen, then we had one gig at this Lorelei metal festival where we premiered 'Disposable Heroes.' And then we came back from that gig and realized we probably needed one more song, so the only song that was written in the studio was 'The Thing That Should Not Be.' All the other seven were written in El Cerrito.

SC: So was the writing for you and James, affected in any way by deciding against taking on a frontman? This was around the time, if I remember correctly, where you guys considered bringing in a front man at one point, or (to James) because you didn't want to take on those singing duties, and—

JH: That was after "Kill 'Em All." That was in between "Kill 'Em All" and "Ride the Lightning."

SC: OK, so I'm getting my history wrong. You were over that one by then?

JH: Yeah, but (smiling) I don't know if...I mean we're still looking! Got any ideas?!!!

KH: Maybe we should try watching American Idol.

JH: I don't know if it was ever officially like, "OK, you're the singer!"

SC: So you've never officially been told you're the front man.

JH: I've never signed the contract around it, no. I'm still a free agent.

KH: Me, too.

SC: OK. So then let's talk about five months in Denmark for the non-Danes. I mean, if you can, some of the memories you have of five—I mean seriously, what do you do for five months there?

JH: Drink.

LU: Drink a lot of Elephant beer, play a lot of poker, and—

JH: Watch a lot of Kate Bush and WC Fields, and play a lotta foosball completely ripped (SW! takes note of this and now realizes why Hetfield kicked maximum foosball ass at last year's Christmas party- ED).

LU: Listened to The Cult...

SC: ...that's a hell of a picture...

JH: ...go to the beach in the snow. Take pictures in a school yard across the street from the studio, freezing cold.

KH: Cliff and I would stay up 24 hours in the studio and then go out in the morning onto the walking street of Copenhagen and start drinking and heckling people. Because Cliff loved to heckle people.

SC: Right.

KH: And he was the king heckler, and he would make it a point to go out and get drunk and heckle people. "C'mon, let's go out and heckle people." I'm like, OK.

SC: Right. Right.

KH: We would do that numerous times.

SC: And then in terms of the, when those songs are coming together in the studio, are there any—

LU: We were really miserable because by the time we arrived in late October/early November, it's pretty much dark the whole time. And we were working mostly at night, so for the last two-three months we never saw daylight. That's one thing I remember. We would usually wake up...

SC: ...wow, that's insane.

LU: ...me and James would room together, and I remember waking up right at dusk, and going for a run in the streets of Copenhagen at five. And then we'd go over to Flemming's house and eat dinner with his family, and then we'd work all night in the studio, right 'til dawn, and then go home. And you know, eat the buffet breakfast at the hotel! And it was the first time we stayed in a four-star hotel, and it was like, "this is cool!" And I just remember the last day, I was the last one to leave, I left two or three days after everybody else did. And I remember checking out, after we'd stayed in this hotel for like five months, and they came over and said "Here's your incidentals bill." And I didn't know what an 'incidentals bill' was, and this one was around $25,000. I was like, "oh, wait." And I just ran out the door because there were, you know, 200 breakfasts charged on there from these buffets. It was pretty funny. They had all taken off a couple days before and I think I stayed and celebrated Christmas for a day or two.

SC: Can I ask if that incidental bill has ever been paid? Are we allowed to ask that?

LU: You know, a great question.

JH: The hotel's gone!

SC: Made bankrupt by errant Danes and Americans eating breakfast is the word on the street. Anyhow, moving on, at some point Michael Wagner comes into the equation, and I'm interested to know what precipitated that move.

JH: (sighs) Double trouble...

LU: He'd worked on a bunch of Dokken stuff, right?

JH: Accept too.

LU: Well, Cliff and Peter were managing Dokken, so Cliff had a pretty good relationship with Michael Wagner. It started when we flew over Mark Whitaker, who was kind of the fifth member of Metallica for a couple years. He was the guy that owned that house in El Cerrito. And we started mixing the record while we were still tracking it, and I think we all felt that Flemming wasn't quite nailing the mixes. So we flew over Mark Whitaker to try and help mix the record, and we mixed 'Leper Messiah' and one or two other songs with Mark Whitaker in Copenhagen, and it just wasn't happening.

KH: Well, you're forgetting one thing. They actually flew him over before the mixing process to produce. And he was producing some of James's guitar tracks and some of the vocal stuff, but I remember at one point Whitaker just like stopping. It was like a brick wall and he didn't feel comfortable or confident about going farther. And then

Master of Puppets

Every record we do, we want it to be the one. That stamps you, you know, the one that says this is Metallica now. And I think every one of the records has.

> James Hetfield

Master of Puppets

The main thing I remember about the mixing experience is the space shuttle blowing up... watching the space shuttle and Ronald Reagan and flag-draped coffins.

▲ Lars Ulrich

that's when we decided we'd need an outside party, like Michael Wagner or something or other.

SC: You mean he couldn't handle where some of the melodies were going?

JH: He wasn't comfortable or confident, I'm not sure which one.

SC: That's heavy.

KH: Yeah, there was a point where he just didn't want to go any further and he felt that he was getting out of his league. We were going beyond his bounds, creatively. And so we decided, with him, we mutually decided that we should get an outside party. And that was Michael Wagner.

JH: I just remember him telling Accept stories and stuff like that, going, "oh, cool!" A real guy, you know? He's a 'real' producer, you know, we're 'big time.'

LU: That was in LA. That was right after Christmas (and January).

JH: Anyway, that was the first time we saw a DAT player. First—no. Actually, he's putting the mixes onto his video camera? Because it was, you know, like a DAT tape. That would trip me out.

SC: All souped up technical stuff.

JH: Like "new technology, whooo." It was, like, super secret, you know? "What are you making, a video?" Like, reverb on the guitars!

SC: I mean what did he give that Flemming wasn't able to get, or—

JH: I don't know.

LU: If you heard the mixes today, maybe Flemming's mixes would sound better, I don't know. He was very, I think there was a feeling that Wagner was 'the man of the moment' at the time. And so whatever he was doing was using the latest technology. He was 'the' metal producer. You know what I mean, so it was almost like, he mixed the way it should sound and the way he mixes was the way he should. Do you know what I mean? It was like the chicken and the egg type of thing, and so I don't remember us being a whole lot involved in the sound. It was more like "this part here and that part there," and I remember kind of being a little more hands-off than with Flemming. When we were sitting with Flemming and Mark in Denmark, I remember we were a lot more involved in moving buttons and faders and this and that and with Mike, at least for me, it was more a little bit of hanging out in the lounge...

JH: ...we had a little more respect [for him], yeah. But I do remember going in and going, what's this mush? It was like a big mush. It was, like, let me hear the guitars, and all of a sudden this reverb was on, it was like "oh, my God, what are you doing?!! Guitars are supposed to be dry and in your face." That was about the only production thing I had to offer. You know. "Guitars in your face," that's it.

KH: No reverb.

SC: Was anything learnt from him in that process, do you think?

JH: I don't remember any big deals about it.

LU: To me, most of those things were practical processes more so than anything, and there wasn't anything that—you gotta remember, as I sit here now we've made 10 records. And all of a sudden in 2006 everybody says "Master of Puppets." Like to me, the process and the experience of it, it's just one of 10 albums. Now I understand that as a piece of music everybody's like "Master of Puppets" and that's fine, but to me it's just one of 10 recording experiences we've gone through. And it's difficult for me to put something more on the emotional experience end of it. The only thing I remember are we started in September, and it was just another fucking struggle with recording the drum track, another struggle with recording guitar solos, it was another struggle with mixing. It was just another, do you know what I mean, they were all just...

LAYNE ULRICH: (loudly) Daddy said the f-word!!!

LU: (acknowledging Layne with a smile) ...they were all just, you know, experiences. Do you know what I mean? James was talking about a video camera. I remember that. But sitting here right now and reacting to the original question, the main thing I remember when I think of the "Master of Puppets" mixing experience, is the space shuttle blowing up.

KH: Me, too. Exactly!!! I remember listening to 'The Thing That Should Not Be' and turning on the goddamn TV on and the fucking space shuttle was blowing up. I mean, holy shit!

LU: For four or five days we were...

LAYNE ULRICH: You said the f-word!

Master of Puppets

Lars Ulrich

There's no fluff. Every moment, every nuance, every vocal, every solo, every drum roll has a purpose. Everything has a kind of intensity all its own. And it's rare that a collection of moments, which is what a record really is, it's a rare collection of moments which hits that close to a 10.

LU: ...sitting in the studio...
KH: (To Layne) Sorry!
LU: ...glued to the TV...
JH: Right on, Layne!
LU: ...watching the space shuttle, and Ronald Reagan and flag-draped coffins, and that's my memory of the "Master of Puppets" mixing experience. And then going down to The Rainbow afterwards and getting shit-faced every night.
SC: Which of course brings me to Rod Smallwood (Iron Maiden's manager and then-obsession for Lars—ED), who seemed to be lurking around that time.
LU: Yeah.
SC: I seem to remember an evening in Rod Smallwood's house, which had no furniture except for one chair maybe or something? And he was listening to a tape?
LU: Yeah, we brought over the final sequence of "Master of Puppets."
SC: This was pretty funny.
KH: Is that when we, you and I went over there, and we were like—
LU: A vivid thing I remember was up in his bedroom. A party at Rod Smallwood's house was always in his bedroom. There were like 20, 30 people sitting around in his bedroom and the rest of the house was empty. And we'd just finished making "Master of Puppets"—
SC: It was pretty weird.
LU: —and I had a cassette of it in my hand. It was like Rod Smallwood, I mean who at that time was like fucking God because he was Iron Maiden's manager. And I remember putting in the record—
LAYNE ULRICH: Daddy, you said that word.
LU: (To Layne) Thanks for monitoring that for us. And by the time—so we listen to 'Battery,' we listen to '...Puppets' and it was just background noise. People were doing their thing. And then '... Sanitarium' came on, and I just remember after '...Sanitarium' was finished he looked over at me, he goes "That was a really good song. Can I hear that one again?" And I was just like, "oh, my God. Rod Smallwood just asked to hear a Metallica song again!" That was a big thing for me.
SC: Did he not start, at one point, giving you guys advice on what you should do with some of the mixes?
LU: There was a lot of chit-chat between two and six a.m. on most nights, most of it aimless babble, if you know what I mean.
SC: Right.
JH: He tried to convince me to wear this jacket that had like a heart on it, and with like lights pumping around it, and I said no.
KH: I remember playing the tape of "Master..." for the guys in Anthrax, and I remember the expression on Scott (Ian)'s face after it was finished. It was just blank. And it was hard to read. I thought, either he's really blown away or he thinks it's crap. And I remember him writing me a postcard a little later saying "Oh, my God, that new album is so great. '(The Thing) That Should Not Be' is the heaviest song you guys have ever written."
SC: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
KH: Yeah, and that it was, it felt really good, you know, to be acknowledged by those guys. Because back in the early days everyone was very, very competitive. It was friendly competition, but you know, everyone was very, very competitive. And it felt good to play something like that for our competitors and them feeling it, you know. Honestly feeling it.
SC: OK. I'd like to address the lyrics now. I was re-reading through them recently, and every single one is very, very intense, quite brutal really. I've picked a couple of lines out from each song, ones which really leapt out at me for one reason or another, if you could go through what they're about. Starting, obviously, with 'Battery.' "Circle of destruction, hammer comes crushing, powerhouse of energy. Whipping up a fury, dominating flurry, we create the battery." I mean that's like, that's hard stuff. But they're great lyrics.
JH: That's the old Waldorf on Battery Street. That was like the old Metal Mondays, and that's where I first remember seeing pits happening, you know, that's from the Bay Area. Because there's not many mosh pits at the Troubadour in LA y'know.
SC: Cool. Pretty intense. And then 'Master Of Puppets.' "Pain monopoly, ritual misery," and then, "never-ending maze, drift on numbered days, now your life is out of season." I mean I think there's a sense that song is purely about drugs

but I don't think that's necessarily the case, right?

JH: That's where it stems from. But you know, little did I know what addictive qualities I had that were going on in my life at that point too, so I related somehow, or worried about it somehow. Some of that came from seeing Skitchy, the guy who 'banged the head that didn't bang.' You know, he was hanging around. But we were the same age, and yeah, I remember him coming over. I remember I had trouble sleeping, so I would end up just falling asleep in front of the TV, the old Carlson house, and he would stop by on his way to work. And you know, he'd 'bump up' on the way to work.

SC: Yeah, yeah, he was flying.

JH: So, 'chop your breakfast on a mirror.' That's really true, and that was (his) breakfast.

SC: Right. 'The Thing That Should Not Be...' "out from ruins, once possessed, fallen city, living death."

JH: Oh, those are all lines from the Cthulhu Mythos, H.P. Lovecraft...

KH: ...yeah. That's a classic Lovecraft quote right there.

SC: And this, Lars has said, was the only one that was written in the studio. And so a Cliff influence?

LU: That was all Cliff's bag of goodies that he brought in. He was the one that introduced all of us.

KH: No. No. No. I was totally into H.P. Lovecraft, and Cliff and I bonded over H.P. Lovecraft because we both knew about it. Yeah. And—

SC: Any particular Lovecraft you want to mention?

KH: Well, I remember when I first joined the band at the Music Building, I saw Cthulhu, Dungeon and Dragons, and a Cthulhu Mythos role-playing game booklet hanging out of his bag and I was like, "cool man, I'm way into H.P. Lovecraft." And then we just totally just bonded on that. I remember lending him some books that I had. He was lending me some books that he had.

SC: Did you ever get into D&D then?

KH: Oh, yeah, I was into D&D when I was younger. I hate to admit it, but yes, I was.

SC: Yeah, that stuff was crazy. I never understood it.

KH: There's this quote that's in 'The Thing That Should Not Be' that is a stock H.P. Lovecraft quote, which is, you know, 'stranger aeons, death may—'

JH: 'Stranger aeons, death may die.'

KH: Yeah. Yeah. Cliff used to write that every time he wrote an autograph. He would write that entire passage. And I remember we—

LU: Didn't sign a lot of autographs at the time!!!

KH: (laughing) Yeah. I remember when we did in-stores, he would always be in front of me and I'd have to like sit there and watch him write out all these lines. I'm like, ready? And I'd take it and, you know, sign and then give it to the next person, but yeah. He almost wanted to live the H.P. Lovecraft thing because it was just so, in his words, sick.

SC: That's pretty good.

JH: Yeah, that quote's from The Call of Cthulhu (the tale not the song which, of course, is lyric light – ED). And there's only like a couple books that H.P. Lovecraft wrote on the subject, but then the Mythos is ten different writers that started adding onto stories, and so it became this kind of a cult, a big swirling cult thing, you know.

SC: I didn't know anything about that.

JH: Oh, yeah, 'The Call of Ktulu' was easy, I mean there were no lyrics to that one. But 'The Thing That Should Not Be' was another one of the creatures in the Mythos. The title was just brilliant.

SC: Uh huh. Another link.

KH: Yeah. The Thing That Should Not Be. There's, you know, there's other bands who write about Cthulhu, like Samhain had a song called 'He-Who-Can-Not-Be-Named,' which is another like Cthulhu thing. Yeah. And yeah, the thing with H.P.—

LU: Like Cinderella had one song.

JH: There was a band called H.P. Lovecraft.

KH: The thing with H.P. Lovecraft is that he wrote a bunch of stories between the time he was 20 years old to 40 years old, and he died when he was 41 years old. And all his stuff came out in the '20s and '30s, and it was printed in all these pulp magazines, like Weird Tales, all these short stories. Some of 'em were Cthulhu Mythos type stuff, some of 'em were other stuff, like Re-animator. You know the movie Re-animator? It's actually six stories, but they only made the movie about the one. And he also wrote that story From Beyond, which is another. And you know, it's not necessarily about the Cthulhu Mythos but it alludes to all of it.

JH: Just remember, sicker, uglier creatures.

SC: OK. Leaving Lovecraft let's look at 'Disposable Heroes.' "Life planned out before my birth, nothing could I say, had no chance to see myself molded day by day." I mean I read it now, it looks like one of the great anti-war songs of our time.

JH: Yeah, I remember growing up, and my older brother had a poster in the bedroom. It's this little blond boy with a helmet on, playing with a machine gun in this big field, you know. It was like the hippie days. And—

LAYNE ULRICH: Machine gun.

JH: What? What'd I say? Is that a bad word? Anyway, he'd always say 'hey, that looks like you.' That stuck in my mind. And the title came from a documentary on old football players, or athletes that had just given everything—

SC: Like (legendary Oakland Raider center) Jim Otto.

JH: Like Jim Otto. Injected with stuff. "Get out there and fight." So they were, you know, 'Disposable Heroes.' Basically put out there to do what they had to do right then and they didn't care about the consequences. That's a lot like war, you know.

LU: Also you gotta remember that's the Reagan years. And that was the big topic. I mean it was still "the world war coming," Russia...

JH: "...tear down this wall..."

LU: ...it was all that stuff.

KH: Cold War themes, and that whole Libya thing was around then, too.

LU: A lot of stuff, I remember we used to sit and we used to watch television. And then all of a sudden there'd be like that Alistair Cooke, The World At War? The British thing? I remember that was an endless thing for lyrics. Like 'war without end' and stuff like that, you just sit and like watch all these things, and then there was Swaggart and all those guys every Sunday night, which is where a lot of that 'Leper Messiah'

stuff came from. I mean there was a lot of TV watching. And the interesting thing back then versus now, is that we'd do it together. Back then you'd sit and watch something together and bond over it because you're living in the same house. You're all saying, "That's a great thing to write a song about."

SC: Yeah. You mentioned 'Leper Messiah,' and I saw, "witchery, weakening, sees the sheep are gathering." I mean that definitely sounds like televangelist territory, right?

JH: Yeah. Definitely.

SC: And then 'Damage Inc.' "Damage jackals ripping right through you, sight and smell of this, it gets me going." I mean that's certainly a statement of intent.

JH: That was us on the road. Destroying and leaving. I mean there was a path of destruction on tour for us, you know?

KH: And years and years and years to follow.

JH: And get on the road with certain bands, like Metal Church... You know, and you'd just go out, drink and smash up a bunch of stuff and leave.

KH: It didn't happen with Queensrÿche!

JH: I think whoever else, you know.

SC: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So the album comes out and Rob, you're in Venice, and, you know, you're hanging on waves, and then this 'thing,' "Master Of Puppets" comes out. I mean what's your reaction to it then?

RT: Well, I—

KH: (grinning) He hadn't heard it 'til last year. He heard it in the last year when he had to learn the songs!!!!!!!

RT: No, I felt that "Master of Puppets" was like the perfect collaborative effort, creation actually, at that time, and still to this day, because it's sort of a fusion of a lot of different elements musically, I think. Like on 'Disposable Heroes,' I mean, that is one of the most grooving metal songs around, you know, period. It's heavy as shit and it's grooving, you know, so hard. It just had a combination of speed and power and dynamics. And you know, songs like 'Orion' were, and are, to me a bit of a masterpiece.

It wasn't like just kind of, you know, everything-in-your-face metal. There was a lot more to it, a lot of colors and dynamics instrumentally going on, with what Metallica was doing, and that was what really separated "Master of Puppets" from all the other bands that were putting out stuff back then. And even to this day it doesn't happen very often.

SC: Right. Right. Let me briefly ask you about Pushead, Brian. How did that hook-up happen? I mean did he just come along to a gig and show some stuff?

JH: Yeah, Thrasher magazine.

KH: I think the way we initially got turned onto Pushead's artwork was through the Misfits. Because he did some stuff for the Misfits, everyone was like, "wow, man, this stuff's really good." And then we started noticing that he was drawing for other bands too, because you know, James and I were skating and reading Thrasher magazine and were "Ride the Lightning," when Pushead came backstage and everyone was like, "hey, that's Pushead!" And we're like, "hey, Pushead, what's happening?"

LU: Just like that.

KH: Yeah. Just like that. And I said to him, "hey, man, I want you to design a tattoo for me." Of course that never happened. But then we came to the decision that maybe he should do some artwork for us. And that's how, you know, he came around to do the 'Damage Inc.' thing.

SC: It was a very synergetic fit, then.

KH: It was a symbiotic relationship based around—

JH: Fucked-up artwork.

SC: All righty. In closing, Lars said that he finds that, you know, it's one of 10 albums that you've done and it's hard to look at it in focus. I mean would you agree with that?

JH: I would. I would agree with that, because every record we do, we want it to be the one. That stamps you, you know, the one that says this is Metallica now. And I think every one of the records has.

KH: Every one has been a different journey. The experiences to get to that point with every one of them has been completely different. It's never the same.

SC: I mean I have to ask you to put yourselves in the minds of millions of people and wonder why does this album mean so much to so many people?

JH: I would say that probably they would think that's the last of our underground albums or something. Like any band, there are times when there are followers of the band, and then there're certain records where you go, well, that was kind of the one where I stopped, after 'that one' I kind of lost interest in the band. And maybe that's true for some of these people with "...Puppets." Or you know, and I don't want to name bands here, with some bands you just go, "wow, I remember that record and that's how I would like to remember them, as that line-up at that time." Maybe it was Jason coming into the band, maybe that had something to do with it. Maybe (to some fans) that was the death of a certain era of Metallica. Maybe that's why "...Puppets" has drawn a lot of attention? I mean to me, and it depends on my mood, but to me "Ride the Lightning" is a better record. And then some other time I'll hear another of the albums and go, "well, I think that one's our best." So for me it's great to have them all really good to me. And I think people's perception of them is sometimes stronger than the actual listening to the record at times. But hopefully, you know, the rest of the records will be seen in this light as

Master of Puppets

I remember playing the tape for the guys in Anthrax, and the expression on Scott (Ian)'s face after it was finished was just blank. And it was hard to read. I thought, either he's really blown away or he thinks it's crap. He wrote me a postcard a little later saying "Oh, my God, that new album is so great. '(The Thing) That Should Not Be' is the heaviest song you guys have ever written."

> Kirk Hammett

their 20 years comes along. You know, "...Justice..." for 20 years, the "Black" album, blah, blah.

RT: You know, the reason why I think that album is so appealing and so accessible is that it's a very well-rounded album. There's a lot of dynamics. There's a lot of different types of songs. There's a lot of moods, but somehow, there's a correlation between all the songs, maybe an invisible thread, because I haven't been able to really see it, but that's just kind of brings all the songs together into a cohesive unit. I mean some people say, well, it's the lyrics because they're about death or manipulation or whatever, and some people say, well, it's the music. It was the best line-up that they had, you know, at a great time in their career. Who knows? But it's something to do with the way it all fits together. It's such a complete, completed puzzle. And I think people recognize that subconsciously, and you know, I think that's why it has so much staying power.

SC: Right. The closing question was, you know, to try and put yourself in the heads, you said something which everyone has agreed with pretty much, that it's one of, you know, a series of albums and that maybe the fuss doesn't make as much sense when you're in the band that made the record? But put yourselves in the heads of all the people who are freaking out over the 20th anniversary. Why? Why this record? Why do you think it, you know, "speaks" to so many people?

LU: Well, I think I agree with a lot of what James has said, that there's so many factors in there that you just can't, you know, it's like "...this and the cover and the where was I at that point in my life, and my experiences, and..." do you know what I mean? For each person who has a relationship with this record—it's a different story. I went back when all the fuss started about three-four months ago and I listened to the whole record on a plane flight somewhere. And I remember feeling that it was a very, very intense experience listening to the record, one. It was really meaty, there's no fluff, every moment, every nuance, every vocal, every solo, every drum roll, everything has a purpose, everything has a kind of an intensity all its own. And it's rare that a collection of moments, which is what a record really is, it's a rare collection of moments, hits that close to a '10' or whatever you'd say on most of the moments. That was what I was struck with. And obviously it's a journey that's not entirely dissimilar to "Ride The Lightning" in terms of the dynamics and the fast song into a title track, into a slower track, into a ballad-y type of stuff, but to me it was just honed.

Master of Puppets

I felt it was the perfect collaborative effort at that time, and still to this day. It's a fusion of a lot of different elements musically. 'Disposable Heroes' is one of the most grooving metal songs around you know, period. It's heavy as shit and it's grooving so hard, a combination of speed and power and dynamics. And songs like 'Orion' were, and are, to me, a bit of a masterpiece.

> Robert Trujillo

And I agree with what James is saying about "Ride the Lightning" which has a very youthful kind of thing to it that I think is very appealing. And "Master Of Puppets" just sounds like it's a little more kind of, you know, "OK, check this fuckin' shit out." Whereas "Ride The Lightning" was a little bit more kind of "we're finding our way through it as we're kind of experiencing it," you know what I mean? I mean look, we could sit here for another three hours and come up with theories and all this type of stuff. And as I'm sitting here, you know, I wonder why did nobody bring this up last year for the 20th anniversary of "Ride The Lightning?" And you know, is anybody gonna sit here in two years and talk about "...Justice" like that, I don't know. You guys keep talking, I've gotta go pick up Dude.

SC: Okay. Thanks very much for the good time.

LU: See you guys tomorrow?

SC: Let me just, one more thing. Playing these songs as you're gonna be with Rob, how has that been? Getting ready to play the album live in its entirety?

KH: It's on the money, man. Rob has nailed a lot of the bass highlights on "Master Of Puppets." And at the drop of a hat he'll play the Cliff Burton solo in 'Orion.' At the drop of a hat. Note for note.

RT: Let me tell you, it's been a major challenge and a bit of a mystery in stuff like 'Orion.' I was telling James just the other day that even just trying to dial in the sounds or the tones for a song like that, to try and get it, you know, to get it sound authentic—or at least to be able to pull it off live and have it feel real has been really tough. And at the same time it's been really fun, even though it's something that actually keeps us up pretty late at night. Me, Zach Harmon and even Mike Gillies (engineer/producer) sometimes, because we're, you know, "how can we get this sound at the beginning of the song," that sorta thing you know, and then this bass solo here, you know. And still, also trying to figure out what he was playing, because a lot of that stuff is pretty fast and furious and it's in an odd register on the fret board. Some of it's pretty high. And it's still a mystery because we don't exactly know what he used—

SC: Or exactly know how he did it.

RT: Yeah, but we feel that we've come close. And the song 'Orion' today sounded wonderful, so I'm excited to play that song for the world, in Europe for the first time.

SC: How does it feel, I mean for you guys playing this album in its entirety again? I mean the non-musician perspective would be that you would surely end up slipping back into the time that you originally wrote those songs as you're playing them live. Is it quite like that, or—

KH: Well, I mean a lot of those songs we've been playing consistently, like 'Battery,' 'Master...,' '...Sanitarium...'

SC: When you play 'em in a set—

...AND JUSTICE FOR PUPPETS

James Hetfield

I couldn't imagine doing a whole record, but "...Puppets" is one of the few that I think every song is worthy of a live performance.

KH: Well, we have yet to sit down and play all the songs from 'Battery' to 'Damage Inc.' We haven't done that yet.

SC: Wow.

KH: ...but just to comment on Rob, the thing is, he's doing a great, great job of channeling Cliff Burton. I have to say, man, he's gotten the riff bases. He's nailing a lot of the sounds. It's great man. I don't think we were able to do this six or seven years ago.

SC: That's probably very accurate.

KH: But because we have Rob...

SC: Is it because of his style?

KH: Well, just everything. His style, his attitude, everything.

RT: A lot of attitude has to go into this, you know. You have to really be focused on something like this. For me it's very intense. I mean it's true, we played a lot of these songs in the past. 'Orion,' we haven't. I don't know, did you guys play 'Orion' back in the day like?

KH: Only like the harmonized bit, but we never—

JH: Just a little bit.

RT: So, you know, that to me is a really big deal, and even just kind of refining parts from some of the songs that we have played, like there's notes in a song that I didn't know that's how exactly it went. And James has been really good about fine tuning certain parts in the songs rather than just going, okay, that's fine. He's been really good about organizing the tempos better and schooling us a little bit on some of the parts. So it's kind of like learning them again, but the right way. And I think that's been really cool as well.

JH: Like Kirk said, we've been playing a lot of these songs on-and-off through our career on the road. And when you do that, you tend to explore and wander as a musician on tour, onstage, playing the same song over. Sorta "well, I'll do a little trill here instead of that, or maybe a little harmony piece here. I'll check along with the drum, or something." And when you sit down and listen to a tape of a show or whatever, everyone's doing that! Everyone's kind of gone off the path just a little. So it doesn't look like an army coming down the road, it's just like, you know, "all right, we're not as tight as we could be." So for me it was, "let's review certain parts, riffs," you know, even like main riffs. And it could only be one little thing that's off—

KH: Like one hit instead of two, or two hits instead of one.

JH: All of a sudden it tightens it up and it's like, boom! You know, we're touring with a lot of young almost '80s revival metal bands, Avenged Sevenfold, Trivium, stuff like that. So we want to be on our game, and tight as we can be.

SC: So basically it's been doing your homework and getting back to doing it as you wrote it, as opposed to taking an interpretation—

JH: Yes. We would like to be that true to the album version.

SC: Wow, that'll be very intense.

KH: Yeah, just trying to capture the original spirit of the album. I mean as James said, as we've played those songs over the course of our career, we've taken whole parts out. You know, just like changed the arrangement all around, you know, at our whimsy. But now that we decided to play the whole album, we're playing the whole 'album.'

SC: And the solos will be the solo of the record?

KH: The solos will be the solos, the arrangements will be the arrangements. All the parts will be there.

JH: Intros.

KH: All the parts will be there.

JH: Intros are intros. And let me say, I couldn't imagine doing a whole record, but "...Puppets" is one of the few that I think every song is worthy of a live performance.

SC: Yeah, that makes sense, for sure. How many dates are you going to be doing this on?

KH: Oh, I don't know, we're not doing it for every single one, are we?

JH: Yes, we are.

SC: Every European show is gonna get—

KH: We're doing it for every single one?

JH: Every festival, every indoor gig, every thang. Yeah. And we'll see how it goes. You know, we've done Download/Donington a few times. Played the best stuff, and you know, let's make it different. It might go down like a lead balloon in a festival, but you never know.

XX

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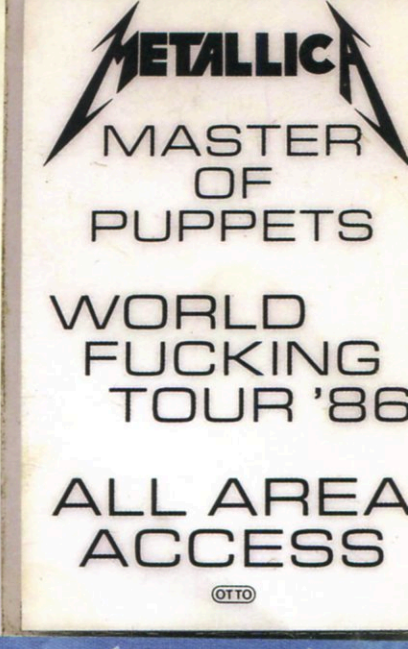

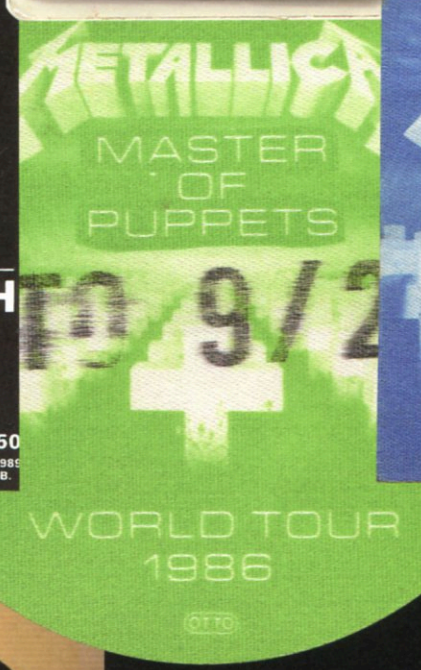

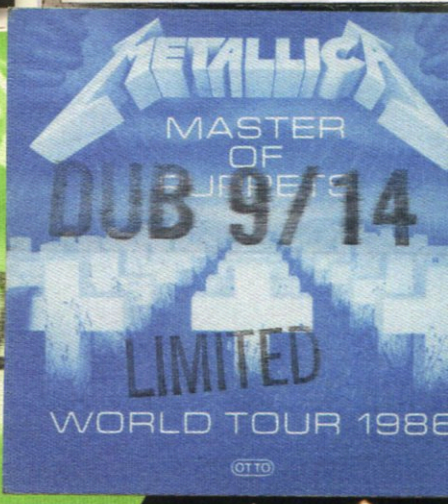

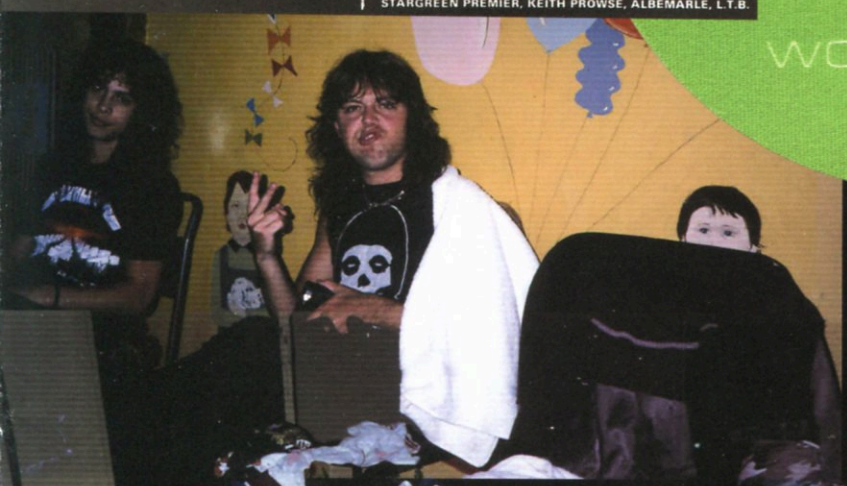

shortest straw

Photo by Nicole Janssen.

Photo by Sue Spencer.

Photo by Raquel Gonzalez.

THE RESULTS OF '...STRAW' 12.4...

The competition was based around the phrase 'a picture says a thousand words,' where clubbers were invited to send in a picture/image which described Metallica in such a fashion. The main obstacle most people would've faced was for no photoshopping other than to compensate light/dark issues or enhance what was already in the frame.

The winner, ***NICOLE JANSSEN***, sent in an image that was quite extraordinary for a variety of reasons (see for yourself here) but perhaps the wildest thing was how she described in minute detail how said-image DID NOT involve photoshop composition, outlining the steps she went through to allow this obviously special place express what she had to say. Awesome, awesome stuff! She will receive her Grand Prize of a signed photo from 12.4 (she chose a shot of James holding his guitar on page 28), a shot of the guys holding her entry and a set of limited edition crew shirts from the shows with the Rolling Stones.

Runners up are ***SUE SPENCER*** with a provocative sky, cloud and sun over landscape shot, and ***RAQUEL GONZALEZ*** for a shot showing her, in Metallica shirt, stuck in the middle of the desert with a flat tire but Metallimusic to listen to until help arrives. These two will each receive sets of limited edition crew shirts from the shows with the Rolling Stones.

Thanks to all of you.

...AND NOW FOR SHORTEST STRAW 13.2

As you have seen, this issue is really all about the old school days...times when hair was dodgy but you just didn't give a damn. So here's the deal...we want photos of you at your metal worst! You know the mullet you deny you ever had? Well dig out the damn photo and come clean with the world. You know those days of skin-tight jeans, hi-top converse and an attempt at facial hair? Submit, submit, submit, (Club President Vickie has also invited those of you who indulged in wearing spandex pants to come clean with the world via a piccy)! And with every entry, 150 words max, please as to just what your old skool metal self was all about and the stupidest thing it ever did...those who are STILL old skool and STILL enjoy the odd bit of stoopidity, we welcome one 'n' all.

GRAND PRIZE: One limited edition vinyl box set autographed by the guys.

Two runners up will receive "Master of Puppets" goodie paks (so please be sure to add your t-shirt size to the entry).

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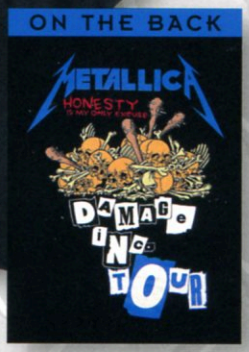

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SO WHAT!